

Saturday January 3 1998

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# The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL  
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

## Interview

### Parky's back — but has he still got it?

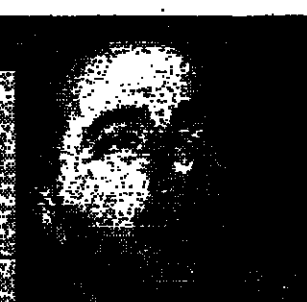
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## Mordechai Vanunu's letters

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# Home Secretary's son named in drug-dealing case after injunction is lifted

## Judge ends Straw fiasco

Clare Dyer and David Hencke

**T**HE son of Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, was finally named last night as the cabinet minister's son allegedly involved in drug dealing after nine days in which a minor personal tragedy threatened to degenerate into a legal and political fiasco.

A High Court judge lifted the ban on naming 17-year-old William Straw after newspapers and radio stations in Scotland, the Irish Republic and — inadvertently — the BBC 24-hour TV news service had already revealed his identity.

The headline anti-drugs Home Secretary, who has made his trademark being tough on crime and in favour of parental responsibility, last night told the media of his "shock and concern" at being told of the allegations against his son.

"Being a parent means means giving love and support and — when it is necessary — confronting children with their wrongdoing," he told a news conference. "When a child does wrong, I believe it to be the duty of a parent to act promptly. That is what I sought to do. My son went voluntarily with me to the police."

In the High Court in London, Mr Justice Toulson earlier lifted an injunction obtained by the Attorney General on Tuesday after the Sun threatened to name William in the next day's paper.

The judge said it was no longer realistic or appropriate to try to preserve his anonymity after publication of the names in newspapers, radio broadcasts, the French newspaper *France-Soir* and in discussion groups on the Internet.

A substantial number of people in the British Isles already knew the boy's identity and "anyone who wished to find out his name could do so with comparatively little difficulty".

The move followed a week in which the story shifted focus from a tale of a cabinet minister's son allegedly drug dealing to an argument about the public's right to know and the suspicion of an establishment cover-up.

The story broke on Christmas Eve when the *Mirror* revealed that one of its undercover reporters had bought £10 worth of cannabis from a cabinet minister's son in a pub in south-west London. Piers Morgan, the paper's editor, had telephoned the Home Secretary the previous week and told him what had happened and warned him that he understood his son was to attend a party where harder drugs would be available.

Mr Morgan said last night: "Any question of entrapment is false. You can't entrap somebody to go and get drugs and sell them to you. They're

either into that or they're not."

Mr Straw's job is safe as he has the full backing and support of Downing Street. "You would very quickly get through a cabinet, or indeed a House of Commons, if every time your children did something inappropriate or wrong or against the law, people had to resign," he said last night.

"I have been as disturbed as you at my inability to speak openly on this matter before. However, I think everybody understands that I could neither flout the law nor act against my son's legal rights."

Mr Straw has maintained all along that he wanted to be able to speak out publicly but was constrained by the law. But Geoffrey Bindman, solicitor for his son, resisted the lifting of the injunction down to the wire last night.

In a cliffhanging moment while delivering judgment in open court after an afternoon's argument in chambers, the judge said he would continue the injunction if anyone intended to appeal against his ruling.

Lawyers for the Attorney General and the Sun said they would not, but Mr Bindman asked for time to take his client's instructions. However, he has no standing to bring an appeal because his client is not a party to the action.

William Straw has been offered a place at New College, Oxford, conditional on getting high enough grades in his forthcoming A-levels. Mr Bindman had argued that allowing him to be named could prejudice his university career. But the judge said it would be remarkable if the college were not "suspicious to say the least" that the boy in the newspapers and the young man to whom they had offered a conditional place were one and the same.

Philip Havers QC, for John Morris, the Attorney General, had also argued that the injunction granted by Mr Justice Moses should be continued. But Mr Justice Toulson asked whether it was "sensible or appropriate" for the court to maintain an injunction which meant that "matters can be freely published in *Greenock* but not in *Carlisle*".

Mr Bindman said after the hearing: "I appeal to the media not to pester William at this very difficult time."

Mr Justice Toulson said the hearing was to decide whether the injunction should be continued. It was not his role to decide whether it should have been granted in the first place.

Mr Justice Moses had rejected the Attorney General's argument that publication of the names should be restrained under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 because the son did not face any court proceedings at the time. The injunction was granted instead under the Contempt of Court Act 1981.



Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, yesterday, after being named as the minister in the drug case PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

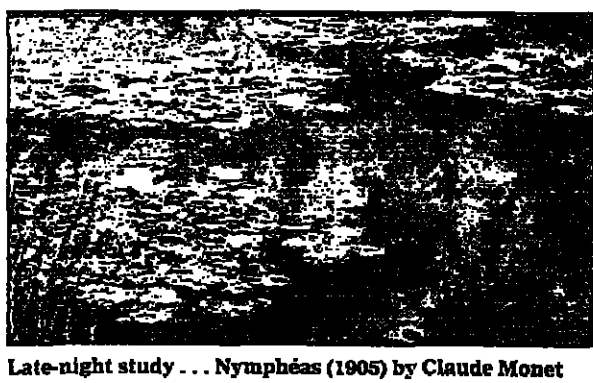
**‘The scourge of drugs is one of the greatest evils facing society today. They destroy lives, ruin families and undermine communities’**

Jack Straw just after taking office

**‘We are doing many things to tackle the drugs problem. But let me say what we are not doing. We will not decriminalise, legalise or legitimise the use of drugs’**

Jack Straw, Labour conference, 1997

**At 3am you can buy bread, go dancing, take in a film in Bolton — or pop out to look at a Monet**



Late-night study... *Nymphéas* (1905) by Claude Monet

**Sarah Hall**

**‘T** WAS once only anti-social supermarket shoppers or hyperactive clubbers who could satisfy their cravings 24 hours a day.

But now art enthusiasts are to be indulged in an increasingly 24-hour society as the Royal Academy of Arts plans to remain open around the clock one day a week.

The gallery, in Piccadilly in the West End of London, is set to stay open all night each Friday or Saturday during its

Monet and the 20th Century exhibition, to run from January to April 1998.

A Monet exhibition held 10 years ago attracted the gallery's highest-ever audiences — 658,000 people — with five-hour queues each day.

With 3,000 people a day crowding into the recent Sensation exhibition, the 250-year-old Academy is convinced there is a market for 24-hour art viewing.

A spokeswoman for the Academy, which opens from 10am to 6pm (8.30pm on Fridays), conceded that the gal-

**Get thin, learn French, get solvent, quit smoking, learn to cook, have less hangovers, write a novel, eat less meat, make more friends, win an Oscar, start tango lessons, remember to flow, decorate your room, don't get an overcoat, read the town moan, buy a convertible, learn the piano, go swimming, write a will, phone home.**

**Sort out Pension.**

If this list gives you a sense of *déjà vu*, take the first step with at least one of your resolutions and call this number.

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## Inside

**Britain**

Britain was warned to brace itself for another bout of horrific weather as storms continued to blast many parts of the country.

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**World News**

A huge underground bunker in Rome built to protect Mussolini from gas and bomb attacks has been uncovered after more than 50 years.

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**Finance**

Signs of a consumer spending and credit boom gave rise to predictions that the Bank of England would again raise interest rates.

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**Sport**

Celtic defeated Rangers 2-0, their first victory in 11 league games against their Old Firm rivals.

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## Black economy booms to £1.85 trillion

**Loyalists risk peace, page 4**

continue to stream in until 10pm. Friends of the Academy might drop in from 10pm until around midnight, if they were up for it. Many tourists are expected to visit the capital specifically to see the exhibition.

Shift workers are also expected, and those hoping for a new view might turn up at unlikely hours.

As visitors left the Victorian Fairy Painting exhibition yesterday evening, the head of exhibition hours was widely welcomed. Michael Taylor, 47, from Leicester, said: "If I am in London for a meeting and hope to catch an exhibition at any time, then this is early for closing."

**E**LEVEN PM, New York. A night of Quentin Tarantino in Crisp, the oldest, campiest cowboy in America, is taking me to the new Quentin Tarantino movie.

It's a marriage made in heaven: Quentin Crisp loves violence, smacks his lips every time a character is blown away. Quentin Tarantino loves blowing people away.

We are celebrating Quentin Crisp's birthday, so it's appropriate that he is dressed to the nines: buckled cowboy hat, matching belt, a floral cravat to die for, a smidgen of orange lipstick, dash of purple eyeliner, blue shirt ironed flat as a rug.

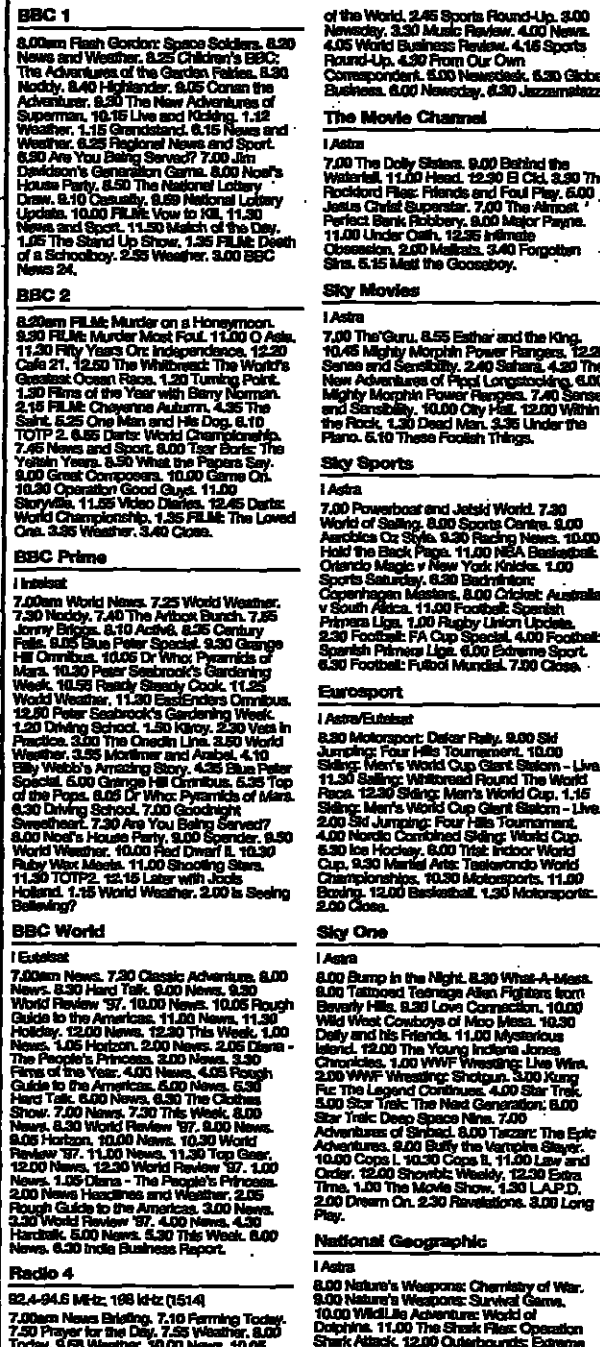
It has been a long time since Quentin Crisp was a British

directed Pulp Fiction, which was received with awe and numerous awards. That made him a happy man, too. But he was wrong: that is what Quentin (the elder) will not last the pace. He hustles his way to the front of the theatre, leaves me trailing, and grabs a seat.

Jackie Brown is another great cop, this time adapted from a novel: Elmore Leonard's *Rum Punch*. But Tarantino has taken so many liberties, refashioned characters to such an extent that it becomes his story. The eponymous Jackie Brown, an air hostess facing up to an unscrupulous, aching middle age, is played sassily by the former blaxploitation icon Pam Grier.

Jackie Brown evolves slowly, as we are drawn into a scam involving cash in bags and triple or quadruple hefts. "I guess I'm a little bit off," through his intricacies again and again, and I never quite get it, though Quentin explains just what was going on on our way home.

People have unfairly said that the two and a half hours the movie is was too long. Pure Fiction was too long because it wasn't about anything but gangs and blood. Jackie Brown, though, shows the wilderness has matured. He's not so much interested in gangster life as in mapping out the loss of a commitment on the faces of these failed, small-time crooks.

Television and radio: *Guardian*

## European weather outlook

### Scandinavia

There will be snow in the north and east with rain in the south. Some of the rain and snow will be heavy especially in southern and central parts. It will be mild in the south with High of 8-9C (37-43F) and cold in the north with Low of 2-3C (36-37F).

### Low Countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland

Early sunshine but this will disappear as clouds increase to bring rain to most parts from the west. The rain will turn heavy in many parts with bluster winds. Highs 7-10C (45-50F).

### France

Rain will sweep west across France. The rain will be heavy in many parts and be accompanied by strong winds in the north. In the far south there will be some sunshine and the rain will be more sporadic in nature here. Highs mainly 7-10C (45-50F) but lower in the south.

### Spain and Portugal

Rain will move into the north-west early, turning heavy at times, and this will slowly edge southwards over the region during the course of the day. The rain will be more showery in nature as it crosses central Spain with southern and eastern coasts staying dry although later becoming cloudy. Highs may be 20-22C (68-72F) in the Costa's but else where it will be colder.

### Italy

There is the risk of showery rain in all parts during the day with thunderstorms possible in the far south. In the north, there will be some sunshine especially in the afternoon. Highs 15-19C (59-67F).

### Greece

There will be a lot of cloud around and some showery rain, locally heavy and bundry. Highs 15-19C (59-67F).

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# Nine days when everyone was out of joint

Rory Carroll on a meeting in a south London pub – and how it left a whiff of singed credibility

**B**ARELY enough to make 10 joints, the little lump of black resin that changed hands in a Clapham pub has induced amazing reactions.

Almost everyone who has come into contact, however indirectly, has displayed evidence of mood swings, impaired judgment and a detachment from reality.

The telltale whiff of something burning now hangs over the Attorney General, lawyers, police – and Jack Straw.

The smell is of singed credibility.

What started life as a tip-off that a 17-year-old boy was allegedly selling cannabis has mutated into something unprecedented.

The crisis swirling around the Government raises allegations of a wayward drugs policy, ministerial incompetence, political interference in the legal process, spectacularly bad news management, and judicial intolerance of investigative journalism.

It did not have to be like this. A tabloid sting on a minister's son was almost bound to be followed up during the Christmas news lull, but the story could easily have died last week, consigned to media gossip and deemed too piffling for further coverage.

Instead, as if plotted by a storyteller who had inhaled too deeply, the Mirror's splash turned into an impromptu saga which today's headlines indicate is far from over.

Dawn Alford, the Mirror reporter who broke the story,

could not have guessed the consequences when she worked her way towards a group of teenagers in the Corner pub in Lavender Gardens, Clapham, south London, on December 20.

Tipped off by phone that a famous parent's son was peddling cannabis, Ms Alford, aged 30, arranged to buy £10 worth from William Straw, son of the Home Secretary.

William Straw allegedly left for 10 minutes and returned to hand over 1.92 grammes of the Class B drug in a clear plastic bag, calling it "good, strong hash".

Ms Alford, in time-honoured media fashion, made her excuses and left, passing on the drug 12 hours later to a forensic laboratory.

Informed of the sting by Piers Morgan, the Mirror's editor, Mr Straw escorted William to Kennington police station, where he made a statement on December 22.

Two days later, on Christmas Eve, the Mirror splashed the story over five pages but did not name Mr Straw to avoid identifying William, who the same day learned he had won a place at Oxford University to study politics, philosophy and economics.

Unsure whether this constituted entrapment or valid investigative journalism, the media nevertheless followed up. Mr Straw was not named but strong hints were given, and in some cases, his photograph was placed near the articles.

There the story might have rested, mopped up by every paper and with nowhere else to go until, or if, William was



Scottish newspapers revealed the minister's identity yesterday morning. Later in the day came the crucial High Court hearing. PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO/MAGDO

charged or cautioned. One the police, who on December 29 arrested Ms Alford for possession of cannabis after she went voluntarily to be interviewed at Kennington police station.

Unprecedented, said lawyers and journalists. Outrageous, said Mr Morgan, adding that political pressure may have been brought to bear. Opposition MPs became more vocal in expressing concern.

Bailed until February for the suspected crime of possessing the cannabis for 12

hours before passing it on to the laboratory, Ms Alford was witnessing her scoop grow extra legs and start to gallop.

Just how fast became clear the following day when John Morris, the Attorney General, obtained a High Court injunction banning the Sun newspaper from naming Mr Straw.

The order was granted at 8.30pm, near the deadline for the first edition but in time for Conservative MPs to ask whether the case was being affected by the involvement of the minister.

Mr Straw, it was reported,

wanted to be named to end the speculation, but under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 he felt obliged to remain quiet and preserve William's anonymity.

Not so, said some lawyers, who argued the act did not make clear whether the legal proceedings which granted anonymity began with arrest, charges or court appearance.

The Attorney General, supported by the judge, was in no doubt that naming the boy would interfere with the course of justice.

Intensifying media and po-

litical pressure to end the farce prompted the minister to give anonymous interviews to two tabloid newspaper editors.

He said: "I want to talk about this in public and reveal my identity but I have been told I can't."

"Lawyers have said I don't have any choice. I'm not in any doubt about that."

"This is obviously very frustrating because I am not the sort of person who normally avoids confronting issues like this publicly."

Perhaps he should have

spoken instead to French or Irish newspapers, which realised English law could not stop them publishing his name.

Alerted to the jurisdiction limits of the act, a number of Scottish newspapers and independent radio stations yesterday followed suit, though no copies of the Scottish Daily Mail, Daily Record and Scotsman were sold south of the border.

The Scotsman said it took the decision "to end the farce that was fast becoming a disgrace to our public life, our

freedom of speech and our democracy".

As lawyers for the Sun and the Attorney General yesterday slugged it out in the High Court, police and legal sources suggested that the alleged offence at the centre of the political drama was too minor to merit a charge. William Straw would be cautioned instead.

The lump of cannabis resin remains in a police laboratory, unsmoked but still demonstrating a potency not normally purchased for as little as £10.

## Newspaper editors hail victory for common sense

**REACTION:** Widespread support for way Straw handled crisis

Rory Carroll

**P**IERS MORGAN of the Mirror last night led newspaper editors in welcoming the end of "the nonsense" which prevented Jack Straw being named as the minister whose son is accused of drug dealing.

"I'm relieved that all the nonsense is over. Everybody realised it couldn't go on. It made a lot of our institutions look very foolish, in particular the Government, the minister, the Attorney General and the police."

"The press has been vindicated. We're doing what we're

supposed to be trying to do – reveal the news."

"This absurd saga is not finished. We still have a reporter under arrest. We'll have a lot more to say when it's all over."

He strongly denied that his newspaper's actions constituted entrapment. "We were acting on information that the Home Secretary's son was possibly dealing drugs. Any question of entrapment is false. You can't entrap people like that, they're either into it or they're not."

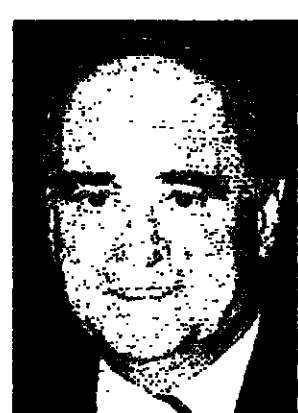
"I told Mr Straw that we'd only publish the story if he took it into the public domain which is what he did, rather courageously, when he went to the police station."

Ian McKerron, deputy editor of the Scottish Daily Mail, said: "It is a victory for common sense, freedom of the press, and the public's right to know."

"As well as that, it must be a welcome relief for Mr Straw, who has made it clear he did



Piers Morgan: Mirror 'will have lot more to say'



Brian Mawhinney: no call for Straw's resignation

Mr Straw received strong backing from senior police officers. Chief Superintendent Brian Mackenzie applauded his "great courage".

He said the matter had been blown out of all proportion. "I am quite sure he has the support of most right-thinking people in this country. We continue to have full confidence in Jack Straw as Home Secretary."

Mr Mackenzie, who is president of the Police Superintendents' association, said his initial reaction to the story was, he suspected, like that of many parents: "There but for the grace of God..."

No parent could be their "children's keepers" 24 hours a day, he said, adding that when he headed a drug squad he had often been surprised at how many young people involved in drugs came from "good families".

Sir Brian Mawhinney, the shadow home secretary, said last night his sympathy was with the Straws and that "on

the basis of what is presently known, I have no inclination to call for the Home Secretary's resignation."

However, Sir Brian, who welcomed the naming of Mr Straw, said it was up to the Home Secretary to decide if his authority had been "irreparably damaged".

Paul Flynn, a Labour MP who has campaigned for the decriminalisation of soft drugs, expressed sympathy for Mr Straw's family but said

the episode had been damaging to the Home Secretary.

"I believe it is dangerous because I think it is dangerous to put yourself on a pedestal. There will be some transitory political damage from this, rather like the 'back-to-basics' posture of the Conservatives."

Conservative Nigel Evans, the vice-chairman of the Parliamentary Drugs Misuse Group, said: "The revelation that it was the Home Secretary's son who was allegedly

dealing in cannabis must not be allowed to deflect the Government away from their rigid stand against the demonisation or legalisation of drugs."

"If anything, this sad episode demonstrates that drugs can affect all families, irrespective of rank or class, and the fight against drugs should now be stepped up with a greater emphasis on educating young people in schools about the evils of drug taking."

## Dog days for a disciple of discipline

**PROFILE:** Zero tolerance of council house star who rose to top

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

**J**ACK STRAW, the former radical student leader turned tough talking Home Secretary, has every reason to be embarrassed by the soft drug dealing escapade of his son, William.

For the last four years he has berated parents for failing to discipline their unruly children, called for curfews for young tearaways, and taken a consistently strong

line against the legalisation of cannabis.

He has made tackling youth crime – and parents who will not take responsibility for their youngsters' criminal behaviour – his personal political crusade and the centrepiece of his flagship Crime and Disorder Bill.

And he was the man chosen by the Prime Minister to chair the Government's ministerial group on the family and parenting.

For many old-style Labour activists, Mr Straw's hardline approach has represented much of what they distrust about New Labour.

His advocacy of "zero tolerance" towards "aggressive beggars, winos and queezy merchants" was condemned by many on the left.

Nevertheless, party strategists believe his willingness in the run-up to the General

Election to go head-to-head with the then home secretary, Michael Howard, on an issue Labour had traditionally abandoned to the Tories, was crucial to his victory.

As for Mr Straw, he is convinced that his policies strike a ready chord among residents of rundown council estates, beset by vandalism, graffiti, drug dealers and petty crime.

John Whitaker Straw was born on April 3, 1946, one of five children brought up by a single mother on a council estate in Brentwood, Essex. He attended Brentwood School and by the age of 14 he had 10 GCE O-levels.

He was on the first Aldermaston Ban-the-Bomb march in April 1959 at the age of 12. And he was only 13 when he made his first political speech, at a Labour candidate's adoption meeting.

He joined the Labour Party at 15 and within eight years, in 1963, he was elected the first leftist president of the National Union of Students. Even in the liberal 1960s, while pressing for the NUS to become "respectable" rather than "radical", he was against legalising cannabis.

Later he went to the Inns of Court School of Law, and in the 1970s practised as a criminal barrister. This activated his passion for justice, his hatred for injustice – and brought him into regular conflict with Lord Irvine, the present Lord Chancellor.

He became personal adviser to the then social services secretary, Barbara Castle, who brought in the State Earnings Related Pensions Scheme which Labour may now abolish and to the then environment secretary, Peter Shore.

He entered Parliament in

1979, successor to Barbara Castle as MP for Blackburn. She predicted, from the moment they met, that he would one day become a cabinet minister.

His political acumen was quickly detected. Within a year he was a frontbench spokesman on Treasury and Economic Affairs and after that on the Environment.

Later, as a member of the shadow cabinet, he covered education, environment and finally, until the 1997 General Election, he was shadow home secretary.

He was promoted by Tony Blair after he hacked him for the leadership and shares many of his beliefs on law and order. Unlike Mr Blair, he sent his children to a non-selective comprehensive, Pimlico School in Westminster. He is strongly in favour of state education.

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Handwritten signature: "محمد المصطفى"

## Tribes of Northern Ireland Main Loyalist paramilitary groups

## Ulster Defence Association

The UDA is the largest and most active of the loyalist paramilitary groups. It was founded in 1966 and has since then been responsible for a large number of attacks on the IRA and other republican groups.



The UDA is a paramilitary organisation that is active in Northern Ireland. It is known for its involvement in various attacks and its commitment to the unionist cause.

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Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, is under pressure to salvage the peace process. PHOTOGRAPH: CRYSTAL ROOMS

## Imploding loyalists risk Ulster peace

John Miffin  
Ireland Correspondent

**A**LEC KERR, a Loyalist Volunteer Force prisoner, sat in the next kitchen house, sipping tea from a mug with a teddy bear on it. Loyalism was fragmented as never before, he said. Northern Ireland was facing the most critical two or three months in its history.

After 10 days' Christmas parole, Kerr, aged 36, was back on E-block 6 at the Maze yesterday, home to 26 UVF prisoners now after the murder of their leader, Billy Wright, seven days ago. He is due for release next month, and already graffiti on the nationalist Garvaghy Road proclaim he will be the next victim.

Kerr's analysis, delivered hours after Wright's death, is spot on. A chasm has opened up in loyalism, with splits between and within organisations, both paramilitary and political. One key feature is a

geographical rift, with Belfast, home to most of the loyalist leadership, seen as out of touch with other areas.

As well as strife, there are now ad hoc links across some divides. Wednesday's murder of Eddie Treanor in north Belfast is regarded by detectives as an example of Ulster Defence Association and UVF co-operation.

Taken together, it means that a unified loyalist approach is gone. The outlook for the three-year-old ceasefire and for continuing participation at the Stormont talks has never looked more gloomy.

Before the Irish National Liberation Army shot Wright dead, the peace process was already in crisis. Loyalists were increasingly seeing the negotiations dominated by a republican agenda. Any government concessions — on prisoners, on troop reductions, on parades — seemed to be going Sinn Féin's way.

The political leaders of the loyalist parties had been warning Mo Mowlam, Secre-

The LVF, which believes sectarian killings helped force the IRA to seek a solution, has brought a fundamentalist approach

tary of State for Northern Ireland, for weeks of the impending problems. Wright's murder then concentrated minds and has served to strengthen disengagement, particularly among prisoners. The most vital constituency, they will vote this weekend on whether to withdraw backing for the Stormont process.

Wright's support for the loyalist ceasefire of 1994 evaporated when the IRA returned to violence with the Canary Wharf bomb in February 1996. The Belfast leadership of the Ulster Volunteer Force feared his murder would force the IRA to seek a solution, has brought a fundamentalist approach, and it pursues that with an evangelical zeal.



The murder of Eddie Treanor in the Clifton Tavern (left) is regarded by detectives as an example of paramilitary co-operation

Without any government initiative, leaders of other loyalist organisations are finding it difficult to counter the UVF's stance. It claims it is opposed neither to peace nor to arrangements with the Irish government, but believes the price is too steep under the present process, which it believes will pave the way for a united Ireland in 15 years if unchallenged.

The Progressive Unionist Party, linked to the Ulster

Volunteer Force, is having a torrid time. Even its leaders seem split. Billy Hutchinson was quick to suggest one of the loyalist paramilitary groups on ceasefire was involved in Mr Treanor's murder. David Ervine snatched at the UVF claim of responsibility, in an effort to draw a line under the affair.

To what extent the loyalist political parties can speak for the paramilitaries is in doubt too. Gary McMichael, leader of the Ulster Democratic Party, close to the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Freedom Fighters, could not see the logic in speculation linking the UDA/UVF to Mr Treanor's killing.

But the car used in the attack was hijacked in its heartland of the lower Shankill, and dumped there; the UDA/UVF sent a number of floral tributes to Wright's funeral on Tuesday; and its leaders also placed tributes in newspapers.

The UVF, meanwhile, has made attempts this week to heal the differences with the

LVF. A delegation is understood to have travelled to Portadown, but was sent away. Its death threats, both on Wright and Kerr, will not easily be forgiven.

In all of this, the breakdown in October of the Combined Loyalist Military Command takes on a fresh significance. An umbrella body of UDA, UVF and UFF commanders, it acted as a break on hot-headedness and as a forum for settling disagreements. It called the 1994 ceasefire, but was wound up as turf tensions simmered beneath the surface in Belfast.

As far as the loyalist political parties go, both Ervine and McMichael have fought to keep paramilitaries on board. The Government has denied them even a fig-leaf, and their comments yesterday sounded like those of men hoping for one last chance a week on Monday, when the talks reconvene.

They might get it, but only if there is no more violence in the next nine days. It seems a forlorn hope.

Gale accident kills baby and parents-in-law  
Gales continue as storms sweep through Britain

Rosaleen Nicol

**B**ITAIN is being warned to brace itself for another bout of horrific weather as storms continued to blast the country yesterday, causing extensive damage and shattering at least one family.

Middle and northern England are expected to take the brunt of today's bad weather, but southern England will be hit again tomorrow.

The Environment Agency issued 25 flood warnings across Kent and Sussex. "There could be gusts up to 50mph in the middle part of the country," a spokesman for the National Weather Centre said.

"There are a series of depressions moving in and it looks as if southern England will be hit again tomorrow. It's not over yet."

Yesterday a woman lay injured in Chesham General Hospital. She had not yet been told that her baby and her husband's parents had been killed when the car she had been in crashed in what the police described as "appalling weather".

The woman, named only as Helen, was hurt when the family's car hit an oncoming car near Prince Charles's Highgrove home in Gloucestershire late on New Year's

Day. Her 60-year-old father-in-law, Mike Crew, had been driving a Range Rover when the car hit a car coming the other way.

Mr Crew's wife, Jean, was killed instantly. Emergency crews cut the other three out of the car and rushed them to hospital but hospital staff could do nothing to save Mr Crew or baby Francesca.

"We are devastated. We have lost everyone," said Mr

'A series of depressions are moving in and it looks as if southern England will be hit again tomorrow'

Crew's brother, Kenny. "To celebrate New Year with all the family together, then to have this happen, is a nightmare."

South roads across the country were closed and motorway drivers were warned to watch out for surface water on the motorways.

The Old Severn Crossing was closed, while the QEII bridge at Dartford was shut for five hours, forcing traffic

into the tunnels.

Off the south coast of Devon, an unladen 22,000 ton chemical tanker, the Santa Anna, was blown aground in the heavy winds.

A tug managed to free the ship in 15 minutes, although the weather was too bad for divers to check the hull.

Two drivers had a narrow escape near Carnaby in East Yorkshire when a car hit a fallen branch and veered on to the opposite carriageway. The car hit another coming the other way, which was in turn hit by a third. One driver was taken to hospital with serious, but not life threatening, injuries.

Thousands of people found their electricity was cut off as falling trees brought down power lines. Two hundred homes were cut off in Wales, mainly on Anglesey.

Southern Electric said nearly 3,000 customers lost power in Hampshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire.

The only positive side of the bad weather is that the rain is calming the worst fears about droughts in the summer.

A spokesman for the Environment Agency said: "Heavy rain at this time of year is ideal because it goes straight into the underground reserves and isn't lost through evaporation in hot sunshine, or soaked up by thirsty plants."

## Extradition case goes to Straw

Rory Carroll

**R**OISIN McAliskey's legal stalemate was broken yesterday when she was committed for extradition to Germany to face IRA bombing charges.

The ruling at Bow Street magistrates court, London, clears the way for Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to decide whether Miss McAliskey, aged 28, should be extradited.

Campaigners said they feared Mr Straw would ignore evidence of her innocence and "sacrifice" her to appease Northern Ireland loyalists angered over concessions to nationalists.

Miss McAliskey, wanted by German authorities as an alleged member of an IRA unit that mortar-bombed a British Army barracks in Osnabrück in June 1996, was arrested at her home in Coalbrook, Co Tyrone, 14 months ago.

Supporters say there is a mass of documentary and witness evidence confirming her presence in Northern Ireland

around the time of the attack, which damaged buildings but caused no casualties.

Nicholas Evans, the Bow Street stipendiary magistrate, granted Miss McAliskey bail on condition that she resides 24 hours a day at Maudsley Hospital's mother-and-baby unit, where she has stayed since giving birth to a daughter seven months ago.

Miss McAliskey must also consent to all future medical and psychiatric reports and deposit a £35,000 security with solicitors.

An additional sum of £100,000 must be taken in five instalments, including £30,000 from Jeremy Hardy, the broadcaster and Guardian columnist.

Mr Hardy, speaking after yesterday's hearing, said: "We fear that the Government is so desperate to please loyalists that they will use Roisin as a sacrifice. I am not optimistic, but Mr Straw has evidence that Roisin is unwell and evidence that she is innocent."

Miss McAliskey's mother, former Mid-Ulster MP Bernadette McAliskey, said: "I wouldn't like to convict Mr Straw of political cowardice in advance of his decision."

The referral to the Home Secretary has been delayed for over a year because Miss McAliskey's lawyers said psychiatrists considered her medically unfit to appear.

German authorities, who have not charged Miss McAliskey, claim witnesses identified her from photographs and that two of her fingerprints were found on packaging at a cottage where the mortars were prepared.

Jeremy Hardy: Not the time to show how tough you are, Jack, The Week, page 16

## Short best known for stance on nudes

David Hencke on a cabinet minister who is trying to eliminate world poverty but is better remembered for a very different campaign

**T**HE cabinet minister Clare Short is still better known among men as the woman who tried to ban Page Three nudes in the Sun than her role in aiming to eliminate world poverty, according to the latest government focus group findings.

The International Development Secretary is highly praised among men and women for her honesty and bluntness in a survey of more than 1,000 members of the general public conducted for the Government.

Women see Ms Short — who describes herself as a "conviction politician" — as a good spokeswoman for her sex, honest and someone who honestly believes what she says.

Men describe her as blunt, to the point and honest. Women criticise her for speaking before she thinks, being too honest, and a militant. Men also say she rubs people up the wrong way and describe her as a feminist who tried to ban Page Three.

General reaction was favourable. One respondent commented: "It's a funny thing that a lot of people have criticisms of politicians in that they are not honest, they never give a straight answer, they are always dodging the issues — when you get a politician that gives you a straight answer then surely that should be applauded."

The findings are contained in an internal focus group report commissioned by her ministry, the Department for International Development, which involved interviewing 1,000 members of the public, 100 opinion leaders from politics, the media, business and think tanks, and holding 10 group discussions on ministerial policy.

The report reveals an astonishing ignorance among the general public about Ms Short's job.

Over 70 per cent had no idea what she did; some 10 per cent thought she headed overseas aid charity and under 5 per cent could name her proper job.

The public was confused about how much was spent on overseas aid. Nearly 35 per cent said they did not know, over 40 per cent thought correctly it was between nil and



Clare Short... praised for her honesty and bluntness

'When you get a politician who gives you a straight answer then surely that should be applauded'

9 per cent, while the remainder thought it was between 10 and 60 per cent.

When they were told it was less than a penny in the pound nearly half thought it too little, 35 per cent thought it about right and 10 per cent thought it too much.

Nearly 80 per cent of the public thought the Government failed to explain to taxpayers why it was spending £2 billion a year on foreign aid. The findings also showed that people were initially sceptical about overseas aid, many believing Britain might be viewed as a soft touch.

Charities, with the exception of Comic Relief, also came out badly even though people did not begrudge giving them cash. Many feared the money didn't reach the people it was meant to help.

سكنا من الالجر



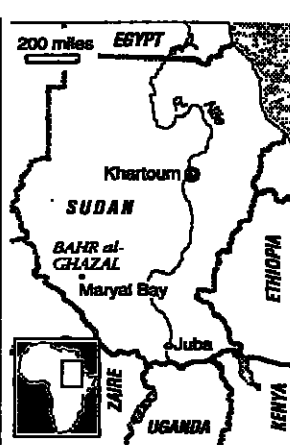
# As the death toll from war and famine tops 1.3m, Sudan's rebels start to crack

**S**UDAN said yesterday that 1,787 soldiers of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) had given themselves up to government forces in the previous two days. The official news agency, Sana, quoted an unnamed military source as saying that 687 SPLA soldiers, including seven officers, had surrendered on Wednesday in the Marial Bay area of the southern region of Bahr al-Ghazal.

Another 1,100, 13 of them officers, arrived in the same area, about 800 miles south-west of Khartoum, on Thursday. SPLA leaders could not be reached for comment.

The defence minister, Lieutenant-General Hasan Abdel-Rahman Ali, praised the role said to have been played by Major-General Kerubino Kwanyin Bol, a former SPLA commander in Bahr al-Ghazal.

The agency said Gen Bol, reinstated in the army after signing a peace agreement with Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan al-Bashir's Islamist government in



April, had helped to engineer the defections.

About 1.3 million people have died through violence and famine since Sudan's civil war began its present phase in 1983. Peace talks in Kenya in October, the first in three years, produced no ceasefire.

The Khartoum government in the Muslim, mainly Arab, north is fighting John Garang's mainly Christian and animist SPLA, based in the south. — Reuters.



A bereft victim of Sudan's war (right), and a rebel with rocket launcher (below)



PHOTOGRAPHS: JENNY MATTHEWS

## Inside Il Duce's war hideaway

John Hooper in Rome

**I**TALY'S fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini, had a network of secret underground passages, a bunker and shelters in the grounds of his private residence in Rome to protect him against wartime gas and bomb attacks, and to provide a means of escape.

Other leaders had similar arrangements, but what is remarkable about the Duce's refuge is that it has remained hidden for more than half a century.

The Italian photo-journalist who revealed its existence said he first heard rumours about a hideaway in 1977, when the Mussolini family's former home, the Villa Torlonia, was taken over by Rome city council.

Mimmo Frassinetti, who published his account in *Venere*, the weekend magazine of the newspaper *La Repubblica*, said the city council at the time would neither confirm nor deny the existence of a bunker and refused him permission to visit the site. Finally the left-led council which took office in 1994 granted him access.

Mussolini's need to keep the refuge secret is understandable: Il Duce promoted a

macho image that could have been undermined by the knowledge that he could count on a safer shelter than anyone else in Rome.

In an interview with *La Repubblica*, his son Romano Mussolini anticipated criticism arising from the revelation.

"Papa would not hear of entering an underground refuge," he insisted. "He suffered from claustrophobia and would not even have himself woken during air-raid alerts. But, since the authori-

'Papa did not want an underground refuge. He was claustrophobic and would not be woken during air-raid alerts. But, as the villa could be a target, officials wanted a shelter'

Romano Mussolini, son of Italy's dictator, right

ties had learnt that Villa Torlonia was a likely target, they wanted to build a shelter."

What Mr Frassinetti found, however, was a veritable catacomb. He reported that a flight of stairs below the ballroom of the neo-classical villa led through the cellars to a big metal door with a three-spoked handle. A brass plate proclaimed it to be an "anti-gas door" built by a firm in Milan.

Beyond another door was the main shelter, made of reinforced concrete and cov-

ering an area of more than 300 square feet. It was protected from gas attack by a filter which, according to the specifications, could process 500 litres of air a minute. It was installed in October 1941.

In the second world war, most Romans wrongly believed their city was more likely to be gassed than bombed. A gas attack would have terrorised the population while leaving the city's monuments unharmed.

Beyond two more doors, on the other side of the shelter, a

passage wound around the cellars to another flight of stairs, *La Repubblica* reported. This led down from the villa to the bunker.

Almost 30ft below ground level, the bunker consisted of two huge intersecting concrete tubes, about 8ft across. One was more than 60ft long; the other about 35ft.

At the point where they crossed, they formed a small room. There was a bathroom and lavatory in one of the "arms" of the bunker; in the other, below the floor, a tiny room to which it was impossible to gain access.

The bunker could be left by climbing a spiral staircase to a manhole and by going up a flight of stairs to the road that runs past Villa Torlonia.

In another part of the grounds, Mr Frassinetti found a second anti-gas shelter, hidden at the end of a 35ft tunnel. Romano Mussolini said this had been built by the villa's previous occupant, Prince Alessandro Torlonia.

Mr Mussolini said a special section of the fire brigade was formed to build the shelter below the house.

"But the works were interrupted when a Christian cemetery was dug up. I remember the impression the sight of those skulls made on us children."



## Language divide keeps Finns suspicious

Stephen Weizman in Helsinki on the Finland-Swedes, who believe they are treated like strangers in their own land

**H**EIDI AVELLAN was born and raised in Finland. She is proud of her country and its achievements and deeply attached to the landscape around Helsinki, where she grew up.

But like thousands of her compatriots, Finnish is her second language and Finnish rites and traditions, while familiar and respected, are not part of her life.

She is a Finland-Swede, descended from a people who began migrating to Finland in prehistoric times, the biggest wave arriving in the 13th century.

Those who speak Swedish as their mother tongue now make up about 6 per cent of Finland's population of 5 million, but they have an influence far beyond their numbers.

local autonomy in several of the areas where they are most numerous, mainly in the south and west. There are Swedish-speaking universities in three cities, a Swedish school of economics and business in Helsinki, and Helsinki University is bilingual.

They have enriched their country's culture and occasionally reached beyond its borders — the author of the country's national anthem was a Swedish speaker, as is Tove Jansson, creator of the Moomin children's books.

Swedish speakers have a disproportionate presence in the professions, a result of their traditional aptitude to university education, itself a remnant of the 650 years until 1809 during which Finland was part of the kingdom of Sweden and Swedish was the language of the educated class.

Archbishop Joern Wikstrom, the head of the Lutheran Church in Finland, which serves over 90 per cent of the population, is a Finland-Swede.

But although their language and culture are protected by law, Swedish speakers still feel they are disadvantaged.

"We are treated very well on an official level but awfully on a practical level," Ms Avelan says.

A Swedish speaker arrested by police, for example, has the right to be questioned in Swedish, but if he fails to find the law on a Friday night in

'We are treated very well on an official level but awfully on a practical level'

an area where there are no Swedish-speaking police on duty he will be held in custody until he can be interrogated on Monday.

Henrik Lax, a Finnish MP and vice-chairman of the Swedish People's Party, tells of a dying elderly woman, transferred to a hospital where there were no Swedish speakers.

"For the last three days of her life she was unable to talk

to anyone. I call that cultural sadism," he said.

Finnish speakers' attitudes to Finland-Swedes vary.

Many value their contribution to culture and business and see the Swedish language, understood in Norway and Denmark, as an important bridge to the rest of the Nordic region.

But others complain that the Swedish speakers see themselves as an elite, superior in intellect and manners to Finnish speakers.

Drunks on late-night buses, when they hear a fellow passenger speaking Swedish, are liable to start shouting, "Suomessa puhutaan suomea" ("In Finland we speak Finnish").

For Finland-Swedes who emigrate to Sweden, there can be similar problems. "Most Swedes don't even know that there is such a thing as a Finland-Swede," as distinct from a Finn who has learned Swedish, "one woman working in Stockholm complained.

Ms Avelan, Stockholm correspondent for the daily Swedish-language *Hufvudstadsbladet*, tells of a Finland-Swede family who moved to Sweden. The children spoke with the pronunciation of the Finland-Swedes and the mother was told by teachers

that they were being referred to a speech therapist to correct defects.

A recent Swedish radio programme on language which dealt with Finland's Swedish-speaking Åland Islands compared their speech with that of other Finland-Swedes.

"But the people they chose as Finland-Swedes were well-known Finns who had moved to Sweden and learned Swedish there. The makers of this programme all about the language did not understand the difference," she said.

There is an increasing number of intermarriages between Finnish and Swedish speakers in Finland, and a growing fear that the Finland-Swede culture will gradually disappear.

But it will take time. Research shows that Finland-Swede men live on average 6.7 years longer than their Finnish-speaking compatriots and women 4.8 years, although nobody knows why.

In a book on his community, the broadcaster Erik Bagerstam suggests: "As a Finland-Swede, one has three cultures upon which to draw — one's own, the Finnish and the Swedish. To be Finland-Swede is such an interesting and enjoyable activity that there is no time to die out."

## Funky Polish rhapsody on a fur-trimmed tractor

Neil Bowdler in Warsaw

**C**LAD in sneakers and garish apparel, and with a style reminiscent of the recognisably American Red Hot Chili Peppers, the Polish funk-rap outfit the Blenders have borrowed heavily from the sights and sounds of United States street culture.

Rapping at dizzying speeds in Polish, a language likened to the sound of breaking glass, the band also blends in English words and invented "scrap" diction.

The result is a verbal cocktail ideally suited to the Western tastes of the new generation of Polish urban youth.

The sleek black love machine featured in the band's biggest hit could have been plucked directly from the repertoire of US rap artists such as L.L. Cool J or Ice-T.

Sporting a 2.4-litre engine, computer, tinted windows and plush leather interior, this curvaceous chariot is not a Chevrolet or a Pontiac.

It is a vehicle much more suited to the average Pole's pocket — and every Polish peasant's dream — a Warsaw-manufactured Ursus tractor.

A growing agricultural beast, the Ursus is the ultimate means to impress your uni and to chauffeur her to that most Polish of love-pads, the hay barn.

And if the paintwork fails to impress her, the fur-trimmed hub caps and servo-assisted fan certainly will.

Like the song it accompanies, the video is a mix of the recognisably American and the distinctly Polish. The band climb on an Ursus tractor to be ferried down a Warsaw street, with an escort of Rollerbladers and groupies, in something approximating a ticker-tape parade.

With its catchy falsetto melody and rap interludes, the song was a hit with the

This band is about avoiding the Slavic traits of death, black and metal

Polish public and brought the band a cult following at the Ursus factory. Its 6,800 workers have adopted Tractor as the manufacturer's unofficial anthem.

Thoroughly urbanised residents of the Baltic port of Gdansk, the five musicians have, in reality, little to do with farming.

The only non-Polish member, the Texas-born Glenn Meyer, says the band is about having fun and avoiding "the Slavic traits of death, black and metal".

Mr Meyer, aged 29, says social parody is a well-established part of Polish culture, with strong roots

in the country's cabaret tradition.

"Poland's many millions of farmers are not the only victims of the Blenders' satirical brush."

Fat-necked bouncers and fight-prone misogynists with Chris Waddle "neck-carpet" haircuts have all been put to rap.

But in 1997 the band returned to a rural theme. While recording their eclectic third album, *Funkotul*, in the Polish mountains they were inspired by the sounds and smells of the countryside.

Sheep, a rare ballad, tells of a romance between a hand member and a four-legged friend. With a Barry White-style lyric and a sweet vocal from the sheep herself, the song is a tale of infatuation and jealousy.

Often when I sleep I see you across the meadow As some other boy drags you away for shearing.

● The Solidarity bloc (AWS) which leads Poland's ruling coalition wants to take legal action against senior members of the previous government for not submitting the 1998 budget on time.

The AWS leader, Marian Krzaklewski, said the coalition of Social Democrats and the PSL peasant party left office in October without submitting the budget draft, which is constitutionally required to be sent to parliament by the end of September.

## Metro robs Parisians of their underground tranquility by wiring for mobile phones

Jon Henley in Paris

**P**ARISIANS are about to lose their final refuge from that all-pervading beep and trill: the metro, until now a haven of calm disturbed only by the rustle of newspapers and the grumpiness of the occasional drunk, is to be wired for mobile phones.

RATP, the French capital's public transport company, said yesterday that it was extending an experiment now under way in three large stations and throwing the entire underground system open.

"We see this as an important added service to our customers," said Alain Chesnoy, head of network telecommunications. "Many Parisians spend up to 90 minutes a day underground, and we can no longer ignore the fact that more and more of them have mobile phones."

Mobile phones are fast making up lost ground in France. The number of users recently topped 5 million — at just over 8 per cent of the population, still a long way behind Scandinavia's 30 per cent, but nearly double the 1995 figure.

Opinion is divided on whether the RATP's decision is a curse or a blessing. "It's an appalling thing to do," said Annick Leboyer, aged 48, who was travelling on the Porte de Clignancourt-Porte d'Orléans line.

"I can't imagine what it's going to be like, surrounded by self-important people talking to each other on the phone. It's bad enough in restaurants."

Gérard Corneau, a 28-year-old marketing manager, disagreed. "We're moving with the times," he said. "We'll be the first metro in Europe to offer this."

Invasion. RATP estimates it will take three years to wire the network's 200 miles of tunnels and 380 stations.

"It's technically very demanding, and we have to install a cut-out so drug dealers don't abuse the service," Mr Chesnoy said. "They're not the people who are supposed to benefit from this."

Join the **End of the World** campaign in support of the **National Kidney Research Fund** on Sunday May 10, 1998

For more call Andrea on (01480) 454828

# US mother stands trial for death of 48st girl

Joanna Coles in New York

**C**HRISTINA Corrigan last saw a doctor four years ago, when she was nine. She had problems walking the short distance from her home in Martinez, California, to school. Granted there was a gentle hill, but the brief trip would leave her breathless and dizzy. The doctor was unsympathetic. She is too fat, he told her mother Marlene, she needs to eat less and exercise more. Christina weighed 17st. But Marlene took no notice. By the time her daughter died last November, the child could not even leave herself off the sofa to get to the bathroom. When the coroner arrived to pronounce her dead, the standard stretcher broke and it took two deputy coroners and four firemen to lift her body. Since her last visit to a doctor her weight had tripled to 48st. The official cause of death was "morbid obesity".

This week her mother appeared in court charged with child abuse which allegedly led to Christina's death. But pro-fat lobbyists claim that Marlene, not her daughter, is the victim of prejudice. "This woman would not be on trial if her daughter had any other condition beside being fat," said Francis White, president of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance. "It's the last safe prejudice."

Mrs Corrigan's lawyers claim that her daughter had a rare condition called Prader-Willi syndrome, whose symptoms include a raging appetite, almost non-existent metabolism and a tendency to

pick at bed sores, generated by the obese patient's inability to move. In court, a tragic picture emerged of Christina's life. She spent her last few months marooned in the family room skin, and covered in fungus. Before the trial her mother, who raised Christina on her own, told reporters she had done her best. In court, prosecutors portrayed her as an exhausted single parent who

history was examined, it was found that she had been born weighing 7½ lbs, considered normal. By the time she was three she had soared off the charts at 60lbs and at five she was already 8st. Tests for diabetes, thyroid problems and pituitary difficulties proved negative. But she kept piling on weight and, aged eight, Christina was so disillusioned with diets that she refused to try any more. Aged 11 she felt so humiliated that she would not leave the house. When she refused to go to school, her mother agreed to do "home-schooling" and said they would read books together. "I couldn't motivate her to get her out of the house," said Mrs Corrigan. "How do I get her out of the house? I couldn't pick her up and carry her. Everything was because of her weight,

her bed sores and why she didn't have a desire to be clean was because of her weight." An endocrinologist, Dr Dianne Budd, told the court that putting the child on a diet had probably made her fatter, because once the body understands it is being starved it lowers its metabolism. But pro-fat lobbyists claim that society's attitude towards fat people made her feel ashamed and contributed to her terrible death. "We are so afraid of what fat has come to mean, we are so terrified of it that we want to control it and get rid of it and surgically remove it and suck it out of our bodies," said Deborah Burgard, a psychologist who treats eating disorders. The trial is expected to end early next week.



Christina Corrigan died of heart failure due to obesity

**She was found smothered in bed sores, blotched by faeces trapped in the folds of her skin and covered in fungus**

in front of the television. Unable to find clothes to fit, she would either wear a kaftan crocheted by her mother or lie naked under a blanket. She had refused to go to school from the age of 11 after taunts about her weight. When the coroner found her, she was covered in bed sores, blotched by faeces trapped in the folds of her

also had a weight problem. She said she had encouraged her daughter to join her on cabbage-soup diets. But, while she had managed to lose a few pounds, Christina had simply gained weight. "I thought she'd eventually lose weight and have a happy productive life," Mrs Corrigan said. When Christina's medical

## Israeli students join budget protest

David Sharrock in Jerusalem

**T**HE budget crisis facing the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has spilled into the streets as university students clashed with police in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. They say they are being treated unfairly compared with ultra-Orthodox students at religious colleges.

Yesterday opposition parties called for an inquiry into the clashes, claiming that the police had used excessive force.

Two student leaders, Lior Rothard and Eran Weintraub, were arrested during the one-

**Patrol attacked by Hizbullah**

**G**UERRILLAS opened fire on an Israeli patrol in southern Lebanon yesterday, setting a tank ablaze, Lebanese security officials said.

They said there was no immediate word of casualties from the attack on the Bir Kallab outpost, 20 miles south-west of the capital Beirut.

Hizbullah said in a statement that a number of soldiers were killed or wounded. Israeli soldiers responded by firing mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and shells at villages facing Bir Kallab, the security officials said. — Reuters.

day strike as more than 100,000 students demonstrated. They were held for several hours before being released without charge. Both vowed yesterday that there would be further student actions against the budget proposals.

The budget is hanging by a thread this weekend after the foreign minister, David Levy, threatened to resign. He and the students are agreed that the budget fails to tackle rising unemployment and panders to special interest groups, including the ultra-Orthodox and the Jewish settlers in the Palestinian territories, on whose support Mr Netanyahu depends.

Mr Levy, however, has threatened to resign six times in the past 18 months and it is not clear there is any chance of his latest threat when the

budget vote is taken tomorrow or Monday.

The students are new to the sort of direct action seen in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. "I think this is the beginning of a student revolution," said Mr Weintraub, a 26-year-old law student who is chairman of the National Student Federation. He grew up in the town of Dimona, where the country's recession has hit hardest.

Dimona and towns like it were once seen as Israel's future, geographical centres for expansion in the virgin territory of the Negev desert, land which the early Zionists hoped to turn green. But the changed political agenda has channelled resources and funds into the scattered and sparsely populated Jewish settlements in territory Israel is supposed to hand back to the Palestinians.

Mr Weintraub blames the country's growing social polarisation on the failure of successive governments to tackle unemployment. It is little wonder then that the focus of the demonstrations was the announcement this week that Biblical students are to receive further funding for their religious colleges.

"This government wants to give hundreds of millions of shekels to 190,000 Haredim who don't serve in the army, don't do military service and don't work, while the 140,000 students at university get nothing," he said.

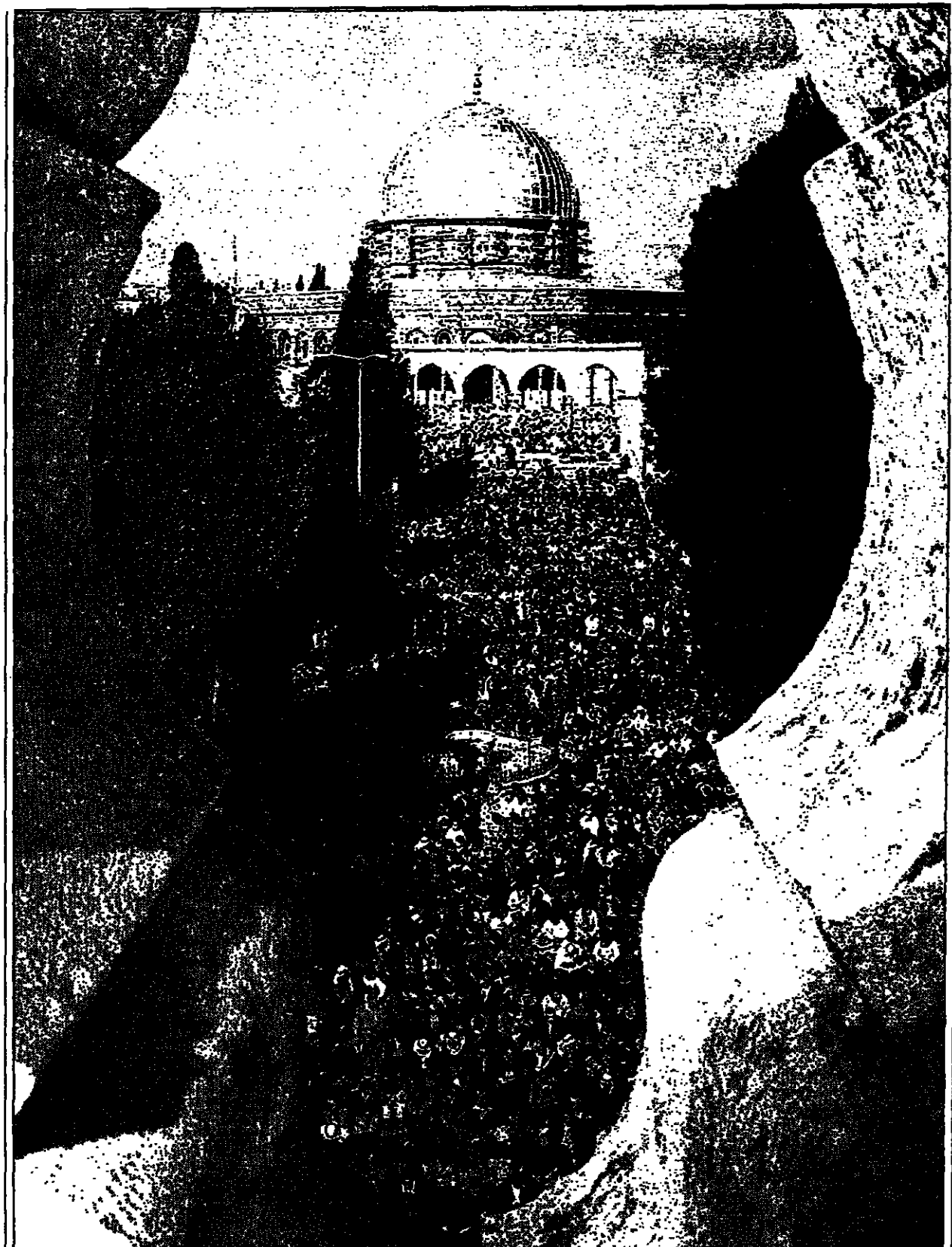
"We fulfil all our duties and obligations to the state and get nothing back, while the religious students do nothing for the state and yet get everything they want just because they have friends in the government."

At this week's demonstrations, students held up placards saying: "These are the religious parasites who we must finance."

Mr Rothard, head of the Tel Aviv University students union, said it was disgraceful that funding to the seminaries was to be increased while students were obliged to serve up to 45 days a year in the army and catch up with lost studies in their own time.

"It is discrimination — this budget screws the weakest. If you don't have power in the Knesset you don't get anything," he said.

The Labour Party leader, Ehud Barak, called on the police chief and the public security minister to investigate claims that the police used excessive force to disperse the demonstrators.



Tens of thousands of Palestinians pray in front of the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem yesterday, the first Friday in the holy month of Ramadan. PHOTOGRAPH BY: ABBAS MOHAMMAD

## Partial results put Moi in lead

Lucy Hannan in Nairobi

**P**RESIDENT Daniel arap Moi was confident last night of winning another five-year term, and the ruling party, Kanu, was looking forward to victory in Kenya's flawed elections.

Incomplete results released yesterday put President Moi in the lead in the presidential race, but gave equal numbers of seats in parliament to Kanu and the combined opposition parties.

The Electoral Commission released the incomplete results for the presidential race, having said on Wednesday that it was prohibited by law from doing so. They gave Mr Moi the lead, with 1,538,116 votes against rival, Mwai Kibaki. They were drawn from 126 of Kenya's 210 constituencies.

Unofficial estimates put President Moi well ahead, with more than 2 million votes, and suggest he has secured the 25 per cent support

he needs in five of Kenya's eight provinces to win the presidency.

His two closest presidential rivals, Mr Kibaki and Raila Odinga, demanded a re-run of the presidential election, within 21 days, repeating allegations of massive vote rigging.

Mr Kibaki and Mr Odinga advised the Kenyan public to "remain calm". "Other opposition parties have failed to back them. The newly registered Safina party rejected calls for a re-run as "nonsensical". A Safina MP, Paul Mutte, said major political and constitutional reforms needed to be won before it was worth holding fresh elections.

"Moi has won an unfair victory but there is no point in demanding fresh elections at this stage because all the same problems will be repeated," he said.

Safina argued that the opposition should use their parliamentary seats to push for reforms and demand fresh elections in two years' time.

## Australian bushfires rage on

Christopher Zinn in Sydney

**A**GHOST town in rugged wilderness on Sydney's doorstep has come to the rescue in one of Australia's hardest-fought battles against the bushfires.

The former silver-mining town of Yerranderie in the southern Blue Mountains, 70 miles from the Harbour Bridge, has been the key staging point in the five-week fight to contain the blaze.

Yesterday up to 200 firefighters and a fleet of planes and helicopters worked in searing temperatures in a dramatic terrain to extinguish new fires started by lightning. So far about 150,000 acres of national park and listed wilderness has been burned out since thunderstorms started four fires on November 28.

Volunteers and national parks officers like Mick English try to burn off country ahead of the fire — a process called "backburning" — in order to contain it. "Because this country is so damn dry everything really took off after those lightning strikes," Mr English said. "But there's no real way of

stopping this until it rains or we get the backburn deep enough."

The Rural Fire Service, which is co-ordinating the operation, is using the latest techniques of remote-area fire fighting without water. The firefighters, many of them women, work up to 12-hour shifts. They are taken in and out by helicopter to clear "control lines" in the bush to stop the blaze spreading.

The specialised form of fire-fighting, far from any roads, is highly dangerous. Ground crews have to be winched on to mountain ridges to clear helipads, and helicopters waterbomb burning areas.

But the incident controller at Wollondilly Fire Control, Superintendent Mark Crosswell, is mindful of what happened in 1988 when fires escaped from this vast tinderbox and swept across to the coast.

**'You are not going to stop God sending lightning strikes. But the extent of these fires is because of what man has done'**

Their task has been made harder by the unpredictable weather. High temperatures and low humidity have fanned the flames, while light drizzle has made backburning impossible.

The erratic conditions are believed to have been partly responsible for the death of a firefighter on Thursday. He was trapped in a burning water tanker while fighting a fire in a forest about 50 miles south-west of Sydney.

"It's a very expensive operation, but when you weigh up the potential impact and costs if we did nothing then this is very cheap," he said.

Yerranderie belongs to Val Lhuède, who first visited the town in the 1940s and bought it 30 years later. Since then she has fought officialdom to keep it as a testament to the area's natural, mining and Aboriginal heritage.

She blames "greenies" for pushing policies that prevent

controlled burns in winter to prevent a build-up of leaves and sticks. The additional fuel makes the fires burn hotter and cause more damage.

"You're not going to stop God from sending down lightning strikes," she said. "But the extent of the fires we have now are not because of what's God's done but because of what man has done."

The firefighters hope to get the blaze under control this weekend. But continuous lightning strikes in the past 24 hours, and smouldering fires which can only be detected with infra-red sensors, have slowed them down.

National parks experts said the area, which covers three national parks and more than 1.25 million acres, was so dry it would have burned even without a build-up of fuels on the ground. But the general feeling is that fire is good for the landscape, even if it appears damaging.

Mr English said there had been some regrowth on the scorched slopes. "I've been back to some of the areas where we've cut helipads and, after two to three weeks, the eucalypt [trees] are starting to shoot and come back."

### News in brief

#### Death toll mounts from Hutu attack

**B**URUNDI'S troops were still combing the area around the airport near Bujumbura as the death toll from a rebel attack on Thursday rose to at least 284, senior military officers said yesterday. An army spokesman said that the dead included 180 civilians, 100 rebels and four soldiers.

But local journalists said they were kept away from the airport and nearby areas. There was no independent confirmation of the number of deaths or of details of the attack.

An estimated 1,000 Hutu rebels launched the dawn attack on the village of Rukaramu, near the capital. It was the most daring assault on Bujumbura since the military ruler Pierre Buyoya seized power in a coup in July 1996. — Reuters, Nairobi.

#### Kaunda speaks out

**T**HE former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda defied the conditions of his house arrest in Lusaka to address his supporters and talk to journalists yesterday.

"It is not Kaunda on trial, it is [President Frederick] Chiluba on trial," he told cheering supporters in the Lusaka high court at a hearing to challenge his house arrest. "We have a good case, let us fight it peacefully. We are bound to win." A group of 50 supporters booed policemen who tried to prevent him from speaking.

Mr Kaunda, aged 73, was detained on Christmas Day under emergency laws imposed in October after a failed coup by junior army officers, which the government accuses him of plotting. He denies the charge. — Reuters, Lusaka.

#### Swastika sprayed on girl

**A** GANG of seven youths spray-painted a Nazi swastika on the chest of a 14-year-old girl at a New Year's Eve party, German police said yesterday. The youths also punched and kicked the girl and shaved off her hair. Police in the town of Mahlow, south of Berlin, said they were investigating two girls and five boys aged between 15 and 18 suspected of carrying out the attack. — Reuters, Berlin.

#### More trouble for Mir

**R**USSIA'S Mir space station, fresh from celebrating the end of the most difficult year in its 12-year history, suffered a fault yesterday in its main computer which triggered a loss of power.

A duty officer at Mission Control outside Moscow said the problem had caused the vessel's solar panels to stop tracking the sun. But he added that the three-man crew was working normally in the main module. — Reuters, Moscow.

#### Niger's ex-PM arrested

**N**IGER'S former prime minister Hama Amadou was arrested yesterday after authorities linked him to an alleged plot to assassinate President Ibrahim Bare Maïnassara.

Mr Amadou's party demanded his immediate release, calling the plot a fabrication by an "authoritarian and unpopular leadership" bent on plunging the country into civil war.

But the allegation and Mr Amadou's arrest threw the impoverished country into further uncertainty after a long-running political crisis. — Reuters, Niamey.

#### Short order for Cuban boys

**C**UBAN boys under the age of 11 will wear shorts this year to save material. The modification will, says the Communist daily newspaper Granma, allow the production of 28,000 more dark red uniforms, and better reflect the "fashion and climate of the country".

Girls wear skirts which, guided by the fashions of Havana teenagers, cannot get much shorter. — Tom Gibb, Havana.

#### Ancient town unearthed

**A**RCHEOLOGISTS have unearthed the ruins of a Roman town built during Emperor Nero's reign in southern Egypt, an antiquities official said yesterday. A four-year excavation has revealed two-storey houses. — AP, Cairo.

#### Chechen government sacked

**T**HE Chechen president, Aslan Maskhadov, has dismissed the separatist Russian region's government and asked the man who led a bloody hostage-taking raid in Russia to form a new cabinet. Russian news agencies said. Interfax and RIA said Mr Maskhadov had asked the first deputy prime minister, Shamul Basayev, to choose the new line-up.

Mr Basayev, aged 32, fought as a rebel commander against Russian troops in the 21-month war for independence. Interfax said Mr Maskhadov wanted to streamline the government by reducing the number of ministries and departments from 45 to about 22. — Reuters, Moscow.

**So why is all this happening?**  
The long answer involves the Normans landing in Ireland 800 years ago, and the short answer isn't much less tortuous. The extradition of Róisín McAliskey

**The Week, page 16**

سكنا من الالصل



Frank Muir

# Philosopher of laughter

JUST after the war, a struggling would-be comedy scriptwriter named Denis Norden was sitting in a cinema watching a second feature about the French Revolution starring Corneli Wilde. The hero had lost his girl and was talking to a very wise old man in a cafe and the old man said: "It doesn't matter, you will forget her. Time will heal the wound. She will find happiness elsewhere." And the hero said: "Ah, maybe, but women are different from men." The sage considered this and replied: "Ah, mon sieur is a philosopher!" Said Norden later: "I laughed, and I heard one other laugh and I looked round and it was Frank."

This came about the first, fortuitous meeting between Norden and Frank Muir, who had died aged 77. The two men were to revolutionise British post-war comedy through their brilliant scripts for radio series such as *Take It From Here* and *Radio With Broderick* and television shows such as *Whack-O!*

After their partnership broke up, Muir became even more influential in the world of comedy as assistant head of light entertainment at the BBC, then head of entertainment at London Weekend TV, a position he resigned in spectacular fashion after policy differences in 1969.

In these catalytic executive roles he guided the talents of many of today's leading comedy writers, and he approached his task with immense relish and gusto. "I could do something," he said. "Because I was there people did better things than they would have done if I wasn't there. It's marvellous to discover that you have a tiny aptitude which you didn't realise was there — that of creating an atmosphere of work."

Muir was the son of a marine engineer who came from New Zealand. His grandfather had gone there to build a bridge — "I think it fell down or something," said Muir. Born in Rangiora, he was educated at Chatham House and Leyton County High School, but his father died when he was 15 and he had to go to work for a carbon paper firm, where he stayed until war broke out.

Although there were initial difficulties in getting a uni-

form to fit him (he was 6ft 5ins), Muir admitted that he had "a very soft war" as a photographer/aircraftman based in Iceland. "A man named Bickerstaffe should have gone, but he went on leave and fell down a bomb-hole and sent a cable back when he was recalled saying 'Cannot come. Best blue (uniform) at cleaners.' So I was sent in his place. It probably saved my life — Iceland, on the whole, being a pretty quiet front. It was a typical British invasion. They invaded Iceland and then hired the radio station at God knows how much per day to broadcast to the victorious troops. I never actually photographed anything for years."

His sense of the ridiculous well-honed by his wartime experiences, Muir started writing for a number of young comedians, notably Jimmy Edwards, when he returned to London. After that chance meeting with Norden led to a partnership, the two created *Take It From Here*, one of the most popular radio shows of all time. In 1948, he said later: "Weekly comedy writing to a deadline is something like 95 per cent experience and technique and five per cent creativity. This may sound as if the five per cent is hardly worth it, but unless it is there you are on a dying fall."

After working together successfully for more than 20 years on radio, television, and in films, the partnership broke up amicably in the 1960s — Norden said that he was beginning to believe his name was "Denis Norden" — although they continued to appear together as performers on the long-running whimsical panel

shows *My Word and My Music* for the BBC. Muir, with his willowy, old-fashioned good looks, startling bow ties and distinctive speech impediment, was the more natural performer and enjoyed it more. "The desire to perform in me is very strong," he said. "It is part of the drug, part of the need. Ego is the spur with me and performing is a tremendous sop to the ego."

"Anybody who has this comedy thing has a power and uses it to compensate for other deficiencies in his makeup, his un-averageness. I think that everyone in comedy is an average in that they need this power to make people laugh or get something out of their system. They have a bump, or a depression of some kind. I think it's the discovery that one can perform that re-adjusts one."

In latter years it was easy to think of Muir merely as a witty and elegant performer, the star and host of several TV programmes (and even advertisements). However, his accomplishments as a writer and executive helped shape and define a stream of comedy that is still potent. He and Norden laid down the ground rules and when the right time came he was generous and humble enough to pass the baton to younger hands.

He is survived by his wife, Polly, a son and a daughter.

Stephen Dixon

Dennis Barker writes: Apart from being one of the most successful postwar comic writers Frank Muir, with his enormous height, cringing stoop, baggy tweed suits and pink bow tie was in the great tradition of English humorists, a man who hid emotion behind a bland, almost topically neutral face. His light work, together with his novels for children, was balanced by a serious interest in words — he had been president of the Johnson Society — which led him to produce more scholarly books, such as the *Oxford Book of Humorous Prose* (1980), a collected tour from William Caxton to P.G. Wodehouse. He had the reverence for the English language of the self-taught — and the respect of Essex man.

Frank Muir, writer and TV executive, born February 5, 1920, died January 2, 1998



Frank Muir... his accomplishments as a writer and television executive helped shape and define a stream of comedy that is still potent

Face to Faith

# Children are people too

Darwyn Sullivan

THE new year sees the 10th anniversary of the 1988 Education Reform Act which introduced a period of continuous demand, pressure and change on teachers and schools. Most of the focus centred on — and still does — the content of the curriculum. The development of children as people was neglected, and indeed during John Paton's tenure as Education Secretary, to talk about holistic education was to invite his opprobrium and be labelled a seventies looney.

One of the results of this focus on content was to reduce the time that teachers had to listen to children and to enable children to listen to each other's stories. The voices of children, if not completely silent, were barely audible. To attempt to redress this imbalance the Children and Worldviews research project was set up in 1993; its aim was to listen to primary-aged children, and to explore with them what it was that informed their developing views of the world. From the project, researchers also gained insight into the spiritual development of the children. The children came from a range of schools — rural, town, inner city, county schools with a mix of faiths and of none and both Anglican and Roman Catholic church schools.

There was a consistency of experience and insight amongst the children whether they came from a religious background or not. For example, nine-year-old Veronica, who had never had any explicit connections with a faith community, was absolutely certain that her Nan was in heaven. She based this certainty on the fact that her Nan had told her she was dying, but she was not to worry as Veronica could always speak to her in her heart when she was worried or troubled. This Veronica did regularly by going to her favourite quiet place, and communicating with Nan in heaven.

By contrast, Michael who comes from a Roman Catholic family and had lost his grandfather, believed that ageing was a progression towards death and wanted to remain young. Despite his wish to still be in touch with his grandfather, death was a separation, and although prayer was possible it was not a means of changing the situation.

Children's experience of separation and loss was a key aspect of the research, and they displayed a remarkable spiritual and moral maturity in dealing with it. They also showed an ability to deal with difficult situations if trusted to do so.

But all too often they are not. Adults make decisions on their behalf — often arguing that they are protecting the children when they are really protecting themselves. Sarah was angry at not being allowed to go to her uncle's funeral because "it feels as if I've locked up all my unhappiness and I need to get it. I need to somehow find the key and unlock myself."

Children told us of the secret places where they went to be alone with their thoughts and feelings. These children who have been labelled by some as the computing generation were reflecting on profound emo-

tions. Asked why they did not tell adults about these experiences and feelings, they gave two responses: first, adults were too busy — and this was a simple statement, not a criticism; second, adults did not inhabit this world where they had these experiences and insights — they were suggesting that adults had lost the ability to be child-like.

What was clear was that if children are nurtured as people, they have the opportunity to have a better understanding of themselves, they can develop a strong sense of identity and belonging. Such nurturing enables them to understand and maintain relationships within the family, and crucially to confront and deal with their fears and other existential issues.

IN SOME ways those of us who live and work with children in different capacities — parents, teachers, faith communities — have been misreading them and failing to be touched or educated by their authentic and deep spirituality and humanity. We bring the wrong language and concepts to them failing to recognise and tap what is already there. In the education system, government compounds this failure by defining a successful school in purely academic terms, and not balancing this with a central concern for spiritual development.

If these children hold on to their spiritual insights and experiences there could be a rich harvest for our society which is in desperate need of deep-rooted values that can sustain us into the next century. And if they do produce such a harvest it will, sadly, be in spite of rather than because of us adults.

Darwyn Sullivan, a schools adviser with the Diocese of Oxford, was co-director of the Children and Worldviews Research Project from 1993-96

## Death Notices

BAVER, Margie, died 1st January, 1998, at 12 noon at Golden Green Crematorium, Hove, Sussex. No flowers.

COOPER, Mrs. (Mrs. Maud), died 1st January, 1998, at 12 noon at Golden Green Crematorium, Hove, Sussex. No flowers.

JEFFREY, Dorothy Maud, died 29th December 1997. Last of the family. Funeral service at 11.30 am on 3rd January 1998 at 11.30 am at St. Peter's Church, Hove. No flowers.

THOMPSON, Bridget Frances, of Bishop's Cleeve, Worcester, died 1st January 1998 at 12 noon at St. Peter's Church, Hove. No flowers.

## Engagements

MILHAMPTON, The engagement is announced of Miss Milhampton, daughter of David Milhampton, to Mr. John Milhampton, son of Mr. John Milhampton.

## Anniversaries

WARRINGTON-HOLLIS, On January 3 1998, Richard John Warrington-Hollis, 75, died at his home, 10, St. Peter's Church, Hove. No flowers.

## Weekend birthdays

AT FIRST glance, there may not seem very much about Dr David Starkey, (83 today), the self-styled "naughty juvenile lead" of Radio 4's *Moral Maze* to appeal to Guardian readers. A right-wing libertarian, who believes that economic and personal freedom is sacrosanct, he cultivates an image of insufferable intellectual arrogance, maintaining that, in the post-Christian era, there are no moral absolutes and that the purpose of conversation is not the exchange of ideas but victory. His historical hero (and the subject of his books) is Henry VIII, whose supreme power and disregard for marriage vows he thinks all men still yearn to emulate.

And yet anyone dubbed "the rudest man in Britain" by the Daily Mail can't be all bad. Nor can someone who has dismissed Dame Jill Knight as a "lady in a hat" or Princess Diana as "a schoolgirl on heat" be without discerning qualities. Then there is his atheism and his bold championing of homosexuality: he has been openly gay for years and a long-time activist in the Tory Campaign for Homosexual Equality. Indeed, behind the ferocious public persona, an altogether gentler man emerges. Friends describe him as "a pussy cat."

The only son of north country working class Quakers, he won a scholarship to Cambridge, and after a fellowship went on to LSE, his current intellectual base. Today he lives in fashionable 19th century splendour in north London. His privacy up there is paramount and he shuns the media world. But if today he



celebrates by reading at least one newspaper we wish him, as an engaging adornment to life's great debate, many happy returns.

**Today's other birthdays:** Sir Robin Butler, former Cabinet Secretary and head of the Civil Service, 60; Roger Daltrey, singer, 56; Patricia Hewitt, minister, 55; 59; Mia Farrow, actress, 62; Sir Roy Hattersley, educationist, 74; John Paul Jones, rock musician and producer, 52; Sir George Martin, record producer, 72; Doreen Massey, Prof of Geography, Open University, 54; Michael Schumacher, racing driver, 29; John Thaw, actor, 58; Hilary Wainwright, editor, Red Pepper, 49.

**Tomorrow's birthdays:** Jackie Ballard, Lib Dem MP, 45; Prof Victoria Bruce, psychologist, 45; Sir Ivar Cummins, of Luss, Chief of the Clan, 81; Gary Forget, tennis player, 33; Abe Hamilton, fashion designer, 38; John McLaughlin, blues and jazz guitarist, 55; Diana Mankill, vice-chair, Women of the Year, 69; Floyd Patterson, boxer, 68; Phyllis Starkey, Labour MP, 51; Jane Wyzman, actress, 64.

## Helen Wills Moody

# Ice-cool on court

HELEN Wills Moody, who has died aged 52, was the pre-eminent tennis player of her era. The famously aloof Californian won the Wimbledon singles championship eight times, a record that remained unsurpassed for half a century. In 1928 and 1929, Wills Moody was the Wimbledon, United States and French singles champion. From 1927 to 1933, the world number one won 158 consecutive singles matches without losing a set.

Whether she won or lost, Wills Moody showed little emotion on court and seemed unaware of the crowd's applause. To many her icy poise seemed haughty. As a young player, she was dubbed Little Miss Poker Face. Later, her distant manner, her elegance and her supremacy in the sport earned her the nickname Imperial Helen.

Helen Newington Wills, the daughter of a socially prominent surgeon, grew up in Berkeley, California, which was then in the process of becoming something of a tennis mecca. In 1919, when she was 13, her father gave her a tennis racket and a year later membership at the prestigious

Berkeley tennis club. There her talent was soon recognised by that other Berkeleyite, Hazel Wightman, the founder of the Wightman Cup. Wightman worked to improve young Helen's speed and volleying technique, but these would always be the weak points of the formidable baseline player's game. When they became doubles partners, Wightman was often heard calling on court, "Run, Helen!"

In 1923, at the age of 17, Helen Wills won the first of seven US singles titles. The following year she was the Olympic tennis gold medalist, and played her first Wimbledon, where she was runner-up to Kitty McKane, taking her to three sets. In 1926, having taken a sabbatical from art studies at the University of California ostensibly to study the great masterpieces of Europe, Wills crossed the Atlantic to play the French tennis prima donna Suzanne Lenglen. Wills, not yet at her peak, lost the much-hyped 1926 match at Cannes, but it was in Europe that she met the handsome Frederick Moody who became her first husband three years later.

The first Wimbledon singles triumph came at her

second attempt in 1927. Thereafter she won the singles championship every time she played, winning two titles as Miss Wills, six as Mrs Wills Moody. In 1935, in scoring her seventh Wimbledon singles victory, Wills Moody equalled the record of the pre-first world war champion, Dorothea Lambert Chambers.

Wills Moody did not play Wimbledon in 1936 or 1937 and that seemed to be the end of an impressive career. But to the surprise of many, she made a comeback in 1938, winning the singles championship for the eighth time, setting a record that stood until Martina Navratilova won nine in 1990.

IN four Wimbledon finals, Wills Moody defeated her great rival, the serve-and-volley player, Helen Jacobs, who also came from Berkeley, was noted for her warmth and outgoing personality. The rivalry between the two Californians, foreshadowing that between Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova as well as strokes. In 11 encounters with Jacobs on court, Wills Moody lost only once, in the finals at the 1933

United States championship in Forest Hills, and then controversially. On the brink of defeat, Wills Moody defaulted, citing the flare-up of a back injury. She never played Forest Hills again.

She won the French singles championship four times, and might have had an even more impressive overall career record but she did not compete unless she was fairly sure of winning. In 1939, two years after her first marriage was dissolved, Wills Moody married Aidan Roark and retired from tennis.

On court Wills Moody had played a power game, relying heavily on a hard, sliced serve and a strong forehand launched at the baseline. She had a deep, cross-court backhand that was not nearly as good, but usually was good enough. She moved fairly well from side to side but rarely charged the net.

Off court, she was on the frontline in confronting the most troubling sporting issue of her day, amateurism. At that time, no amateur was supposed to make money from sport but many like Suzanne Lenglen and Bill Tilden did. "The only way now open for an amateur to avoid professionalism," Wills Moody wrote provocatively in 1931, "is for him to be rolled in cotton wool and mothballs between tennis seasons." She wore designer clothes and exhibited and sold her drawings and paintings, some of them on tennis subjects, in galleries in London, Paris and New York. She published three books on tennis and frequently and unabashedly wrote for newspapers and magazines.

In her autobiography, *Fifteen Thirty*, Wills Moody set forth an ideal of perfectionism in all things: "I know that I would not have life if I were deprived of trying, hunting, working for some objective within which there lies the beauty of perfection." On court, she rarely made an error.

Adrianne Blue



Winning Wimbledon... Helen Wills Moody on her way to victory in 1935

## CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN A REPORT on Page 11 yesterday, headlined Bitterness deepens over land grab, we incorrectly included the writer Doris Lessing in a short list of prominent people likely to lose land in Zimbabwe. Ms Lessing has asked us to point out that she has never owned a farm or anything else either in Zimbabwe or Southern Rhodesia. We are happy to make that clear.

the tenor, Pavarotti, came from Modena, opening the possibility of his birth in Western Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Senegal, Spain, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, North Dakota or (Al Madinah) Saudi Arabia. He comes from Modena in Italy.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 9550 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 9697. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

IN A question-and-answer sidebar accompanying a report about University Challenge, (Page 8, December 31), we gave the impression that

No-one watches television any more...

...than us

The Guardian



## The end of a shabby episode

### Now let's discuss the issues

SO, AT LAST, the secret that had become an open secret is out. The person whose son was caught buying cannabis for a specially placed Mirror journalist was revealed last night as Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, a man who has built his reputation as an iron politician with zero tolerance for crime, including drug abuse. Mr Straw has conducted himself with dignity so far in this distressing affair, which has turned a comparatively minor offence that would normally not have seen the light of day, into a national story. It has occupied acres of newspaper which many might think would have been more profitably devoted to exposing something else like the serious heroin and other hard-drug problems afflicting every part of the country. Instead, the centre of the nation's attention seems to have been focused on a schoolboy who committed an offence which, like it or not, is so common that it is ignored by the police, and whose only claim to fame is that he happens to be the son of the Home Secretary. This ought to have been a private matter. The sons and daughters of famous politicians have extra pressures to cope with and it doesn't follow that they have no right to privacy just because they have famous parents. The Home Secretary hasn't himself been accused of operating double standards. Indeed he acted promptly and zealously in voluntarily taking his son down to the police station soon after he learned of the offence from the newspaper.

Everything about this episode has been over the top: from the five pages the Mirror originally published about a story it claims it didn't intend to print at all (why, then did it feel impelled to publish so much?) to the equally over-the-top reaction of the police. They arrested the Mirror journalist for possession of the drug she obtained from Mr Straw's son, which she had no intention of using. As a result of all this an incident that should have merited no more than a small story has escalated beyond belief. And who knows how long it will now go on for. Will it now be open house on writing about Mr Straw's son and the school he attended (though this incident happened off the premises)?

This story has many layers of complexity. One of the reasons why the Scottish papers decided to name Mr Straw was that he himself was quoted as saying that he wished he could go public. But, as Roger Gale, vice-chairman of the Conservatives' culture and media committee, said yesterday, while Mr Straw may have wanted to be named, if the boy had not been a minister's son, newspapers would not have "placed both parties in a position where, whatever the code of conduct, naming was inevitable".

When normal service is resumed, then the debate must return to two serious policy issues. The first is cannabis itself. This paper has urged successive governments to adopt a Dutch approach whereby cannabis is not legalised but decriminalised: in this situation the question of a prosecution for possessing small amounts would simply not arise. Second, no one can pretend that this is a victory for freedom of speech. What it does do is to raise fresh worries about the right to privacy which have yet to be resolved.

## Doomsday count

Blair is right to hassle industry

THERE IS now one year and 362 days to go before we will know the extent of the havoc created by the biggest mistake in business history. The magnitude of that mistake — only using two digits instead of four to designate the date in computer code — is only slowly sinking into the corporate consciousness. Tony Blair is absolutely right to issue a "wake-up" call to industry and to use his position as President of the EU to raise awareness in Europe. The Prime Minister has been alarmed by reports that half of British companies have yet to act and that the ensuing chaos could trigger a recession. According to some US estimates the global cost of rectifying the problem will soar to \$600 billion. And that's before lawyers get in on the act when companies sue because corrupted data has entered their own computers from outside. Europe's problem will be worse than the US because of the electronic problems linked to the launch of the euro which coincides with removal of the millennium bug.

The problem dates from the fifties and sixties when computer programmers thought they were being clever by including the date not as (say) 1961 but as 61 in order to save scarce computer memory. This means that when midnight is struck on Friday December 31, 1999 computer clocks will roll over from 99 to 00, they will know what time it is but not which century they are in. Unless corrective action is taken this could cause chaos in banks, hospitals, factories, refineries, traffic lights, air traffic control and hundreds of thousands of applications using time-based calculations. Very few airlines are confident yet that they will be able to risk putting their planes in the air on the first day of the new millennium for fear of something catastrophic happening. Railtrack has warned many of its 12,000 workers to redraw Hogmanay plans on M day in case computers controlling its signalling system are affected.

This year is vital because it takes two years to correct the problems in a medium-to-large enterprise. Soon there will be too many panic-stricken companies chasing too few qualified programmers. Any corporation that doesn't get to grips quickly risks a meltdown. One consultancy, IDC, estimates that 11 per cent of British companies representing 27 per cent of gross domestic product will miss their year 2000 targets. In these circumstances the Government is completely right to start sounding the alarm bells. Too many companies still feel either that it is not a serious problem or that it is a minor one that the "boffins" will be able to sort out. It isn't. It is a major problem requiring urgent direction from the very top of every British company utilising computers or embedded chips. It is not only a tragedy that this has to happen, but a colossal waste of resources. Some of the cash used to remedy the faults may be used to speed the scrapping of old computer systems, but most will go on repairs that wouldn't have been necessary if the programmers of old had been wiser. The sums involved in making good the damage are so huge that they will undermine the productivity savings that computers have hitherto generated. Mr Blair is right to turn it into a mainstream political problem. But the Government may have to get much more involved if we are to prevent a very serious problem from becoming a catastrophe.

## Letters to the Editor

### Absence of a truancy policy

IN your report (Truant pupils blamed for wave of street crime, January 2), John Carvel reports the Government's demand for "urgent priority" to be given to the problems of school truancy.

Not, I hope, with massive penalties against schools and parents that will serve no purpose whatever. The problem of school truancy can best be brought under control by making education more relevant to the needs of children, loosening the National Curriculum, removing completely the compulsory element from GCSE studies and funding courses aimed at the needs of these disaffected young people to give them self-esteem and self-confidence. In other words, stop meddling with working-class children with the prejudices of the conservative middle classes.

L A Summers,  
32 Ribston Gardens,  
Paddock Wood,  
Kent TN12 6BA.

YOUR story about the connection between truancy and youth crime tells us what every inner-city councillor has known for years. Every young person is entitled to access to an education system which takes them beyond basic literacy and numeracy and if some cannot get it in our state school system, then it is in their interest and ours to make sure they get it somewhere else.

(Cllr) David Franks,  
10 Hart Hill Drive,  
Luton LU2 0AX.

YOUR article on papers for parents of persistent truants (Parents to get papers in 322m truancy plan, December 30) illustrates just how little has been learned. The educational equivalent of electronic tagging only passes the problem back to the parent, the person who has already demonstrated an inability to take "whatever action is necessary to get their children back into class". But truancy only addresses the tip of the iceberg. The school in Durham you name recorded absence rates of 15 per cent for the past year, of which only just over 2 per cent could be considered truancy. That means for every day missed through truancy, more than six were missed for other reasons — the equivalent of every student having an extra six weeks holiday a year. Not a small group of "reluctant attenders", but the majority of the school population then take this learned behaviour to the workplace. It is the effective, school-centred approach that makes the difference, enabling schools to harness their power to prevent the many millions of avoidable absences. The approach is already operated by some other schools in Durham as well as in other LEAs. Colin d'Angelo,  
Improving School Attendance,  
42 Culverley Road,  
London SE8 2LA.

### History man

WHILE not in a position to know if Christopher Hill or John Seville were offered recognition of their work as historians in the new year honours (letters January 1), I think we can be confident that they will welcome the recognition given to Eric Hobsbawm for his services to history. But we can be sure that Hobsbawm's massive historical achievements have done more to win people to socialism than Keith Flett's footling letters to a multitude of publications.

Tony Atienza,  
Chair, Socialist History Society,  
35 Hospital Road,  
Bury St Edmunds IP83 3JU.

THE burden of the Kennedy family is captured in two phrases. The first is a 1970s American black joke, a version of those stupid-question put-downs about whether the Pope is a Catholic: "Does Rose Kennedy have a black dress?" The second phrase is the author Dominick Dunne's description of the demons which afflict Senator Edward Kennedy: "He has walked behind too many coffins."

Although Rose Kennedy has now attended her last funeral, the surviving Kennedy woman will put on their inky outfits again this weekend and the Senator will follow yet another casket. Michael Kennedy — son of Robert, nephew of JFK — is dead at 36, in a skiing accident: one more candle to be lit on All

## Work needed on welfare

THE final part of the series on welfare to work (New push on jobs, January 1) made little reference to employment conditions. Unfortunately for the unemployed forced on to Labour's New Deal schemes, there is no assurance of decent pay, any genuine training, or any prospect that once the subsidy to the employer ends after six months, the employee will be kept on.

Worryingly, the Government plans to subsidise New Deal work regardless of whether or not the companies are hostile to unions. There will be no guarantee that New Deal employees will be able to join a union and so able to raise concerns on things such as health and safety or pay. Labour should not subsidise non-unionised companies.

Martin Coburne,  
104 Fir Tree Lane,  
Bucklow Wood,  
Warrington,  
Cheshire WA5 4NE.

IN Making it work for lone parents (December 31), mention is made of the New Deal for the young unemployed, reminding us of the benefit penalties. In Burger kids march on UK stomachs in the same issue, it is stated: "McDonald's claims that by 2000 it will be the single biggest employer of those aged between 16 and 30".

In other words the Government is prepared to whip school-leavers into soul-destraining, dull, repetitive, prospectless, character-destroying ("have a good day") jobs,

for the sake of reducing the welfare statistic. It is time the nature of work was examined in the computer age. Perhaps as Bertrand Russell foresaw, it may be wiser to support and value those who wish to be out of the employment arena, live on adequate subsistence for as long as they wish, and devote themselves to music, painting, excavation or mountaineering.

Ian Flintoff,  
22 Chaldon Road,  
London SW8 7NJ.

THANK you for telling us more about welfare in Wisconsin (Where a cliff wind blows in from the real world, December 29). Next time you send a reporter with practical experience of childcare, who would find out and report answers to questions such as the following: Who looks after pre-school children of welfare mothers who are on how much are the carers paid and how many children do they look after? Do any of the welfare mothers take up this work? If so, can they be paid for looking after their own children? If not, how are they disadvantaged from doing so? How is the quality of childcare assessed, and how happy are the mothers with the care their children receive?

Janet Warren,  
32 Willow Close,  
Oxford OX4 9AN.

IF THE Labour Government is serious about wishing to encourage more disabled people to participate in work, then greater flexibility in em-

ployment and benefit provision is needed. My possibilities of returning to part-time work are prevented by legislation that is in the power of the Government to change. I developed multiple sclerosis in 1983. Until recently I have managed to continue my work as a lecturer in higher education. But much decreased mobility and other medical problems are now making this impossible and I shall be applying for early retirement on health grounds.

But I am not completely incapacitated and could manage some part-time work. Frustratingly, the current rules for the teachers' superannuation scheme mean that I will not be allowed to work in this way. Watched and signed by Robert,  
24 Colley Lane,  
Sandbach,  
Cheshire CW11 4HE.

THE Government will be making a mistake if it thinks of users of welfare as some kind of disposal collateral who can safely be victimised in battles for votes or short-term financial savings. The evidence which the Children's Commission received from welfare state service users during its three-year inquiry and published this summer makes clear that they want to see major changes in policy and provision, but not the kind of backdoor-cutting cost-cutting which is now dominating debate. Crucially people on the receiving end of welfare want a say in its reform. Social policy reform which doesn't involve and include its

users is invariably retrograde and ineffective, from tower blocks to the Child Support Agency. As disabled people have shown on the streets, welfare users' views aren't sought, they won't just go away. The key welfare reform for the new millennium and the basis for challenging social exclusion is the involvement of service users in welfare reform and practice. Peter Beresford,  
Tempo House,  
15 Falcon Road,  
London SW11 2RJ.

THE prospect of taking up a job that will do little more than earn the cost of your home, is not likely to be attractive to someone on housing benefit. However, it does not follow that a reduction in this benefit is the only or the best way of lowering this barrier.

There is another less obvious route — a reduction in council-house rents. The last government insisted on councils increasing rents far more than they would have wished to do. The surplus revenue thus generated is being used to pay housing benefit to council tenants.

If the housing benefit for council tenants was paid out of general taxation, Watford could cut council rents by half and still run its housing department from the rent collected. The benefit bill for council tenants would be halved and the incentive to find employment would be greatly increased. Richard Atkins,  
154 Gannons Lane,  
Watford WD2 5HY.

It implies by its layout. Here the message is: "These men have worth." Joy Brookfield,  
28 South Lodge,  
Catsfield, Gillingham,  
Hampshire PO15 5NG.

### Up in smoke

IF SUCCESSFULLY gave up smoking using a method similar to that of Stanley Medicks (Letters, January 2). The crucial spur for me not to smoke was imagining Margaret Thatcher behind the long line of unsmoked cigarettes, rubbing her hands with glee at the money she would make from my smoking via her paid association with the tobacco industry. A L Clinton,  
279 Adwood Road,  
Adwood, Stockport.

### A Country Diary

NORTH PEMBROKESHIRE: The West is wet, but recently it's been wettest. One night the road through the village turned into a river. Water cascaded down hillsides, streams flooded the highways. Half-older stones, a farm and some houses. The child has a still centre even in the roughest weather. The path down to the sea is now one long landslide. The streams you cross have bands of flattened grass and debris. When you reach the cliffs you are rewarded with the colours of the winter sea: blue of lead and pearly edged with white. The cliffs are all wet.

As the daylight goes, the experience of winter sludges up the hills with you — new, cold and damp. Then you look back at Llanwnda where lights are appearing in the houses, small patches of brightness in the wet earth and that strange winter pleasure is upon you. Come on, dogs, get moving — home for tea. Then a huge full moon appears. At the next full moon the days will be waxing.

AUDREY INSCHE



Italy shows solid defence in the box

I HAVE to disagree with Frank Keating (A distinctly French flavour to this hectic new year, January 2). Italy took the Jules Rimet Trophy because of its victory in the 1938 World Cup. And there are pictures of it. Duce receiving Vittorio Pozzo's triumphant squad. But

fears of seizure and possibly meltdown clearly worried the Italian Federation's Dr Barassi, who kept the trophy hidden in a shoe box under his bed, never mentioning it to FIFA after the war. R A Vaughan,  
11a Temple Sheen Road,  
London SW14 7PY.

### Lack of foresight on the future

SCIENTISTS and science writers should brush up on philosophy. Tim Radford's Futurology article (Millennium blues again, January 1) falls for J B S Haldane's oft-quoted idea that "the universe was not only queerer than we may suppose, it was queerer than we can suppose". But the puzzle is, how can Haldane know this? Asserting an unbridgeable gap between reality and observer, while also dissolving it, simply collapses in contradiction. It's no different from those who assume answers to questions in principle unanswerable. Or the religious who claim to know God's existence or mind. Why this matters is that the commonplace failure, like Haldane's, to see the perspective and reflective nature of knowledge — is that nothing can be known outside a human perspective, and that the observer is always part of the picture being observed — means there is no proper framework for social science (psychology, sociology, economics, etc.) and hence no progress on any of its central issues.

Instead, such inquiry is, as nowadays, modelled inappropriately on the methods of physics. This makes it reductionist and brings only stultification and ineptitude, and ultimately breakdown. David Rodway,  
Lecturer in art and philosophy,  
Kensington & Chelsea College,  
London SW10 0QS.

Tim Radford suggests that the future remain to be discovered. He has evidently not read Dean Radin's The Conscious Universe (Harper Edge), which can be ordered over the Internet, which analyses the evidence, based on scientific research, arguing strongly in favour of the existence of such capacities. If asked to nominate the most significant scientific event of 1997, I would cite the publication of that book. (Prof) Brian Josephson,  
Cavendish Laboratory,  
Cambridge.

Please include a full postal address. We may edit letters.

### Recipe for Cook

DON'T think that you are right to describe Robin Cook as timid and "as instinctively Atlanticist as his Tory predecessors" (Europe's coming home, January 1), where a EU common foreign and security policy is concerned. I understand that he is open-minded outside his own party. But he is not a French and a German policy adviser while he is president of the European Council so that he can have the benefit of an alternative Euro-centred view of what is possible. Norman Dombey,  
Professor of Theoretical Physics,  
Centre for Theoretical Physics,  
University of Sussex,  
Brighton BN1 9QJ.



Mark Lawson

THE burden of the Kennedy family is captured in two phrases. The first is a 1970s American black joke, a version of those stupid-question put-downs about whether the Pope is a Catholic: "Does Rose Kennedy have a black dress?" The second phrase is the author Dominick Dunne's description of the demons which afflict Senator Edward Kennedy: "He has walked behind too many coffins."

Soul's Day for the family dead, including his brother, David, who took a fatal drug overdose in 1964.

According to taste or faith, the recurrent tragedies of the Kennedy family can be attributed to: 1) bad luck 2) a curse 3) genes 4) environment. The first option, though plausible, is unlikely to attract a columnist. The second — a Massachusetts House of Representatives — is also unlikely. Although American Christian fundamentalists and classical scholars may be tempted. The explanation lies somewhere between their inheritance and their lifestyle.

The possibility of a genetic disposition to unhappiness was raised by Robert, one of Michael's brothers. In a recent interview, in which he revealed that he was one of nine Kennedys to have sought the help of Alcoholics Anonymous. There is much medical evidence that drunkenness may be inherited, while the Kennedy men's insensitive and sometimes virtually homicidal treatment of women probably also owes something to a volatile and greedy temperament passed down from the family patriarch, Joe Kennedy, and consolidated by example.

But another traditional element in the makeup of Kennedy males has been recklessness, not always fuelled by alcohol. While Jack and Bobby died as a result of a standard risk accepted by all senior politicians, their political careers and sex lives showed a fascination with invincible trouble.

In resulting from an accident while playing what is described as the family's "own version" of golf on the glamorous slopes of Aspen, Colorado, Michael's death again brought together the two central elements of a Kennedy life: money and recklessness.

Perhaps this carelessness about consequences was a built-in aspect of their character. Their experiences, though, may also be to blame. Michael and his siblings and cousins, the third generation of the clan to become famous, grew up with a gallery of ancestral role models unmatched in history. The tales of fathers, aunts and uncles included two political assassinations captured live on camera, two plane crashes (one military, one civilian) and incarceration in an institution after a failed lobotomy. It would be unfair to say

that the younger Kennedys have a death wish, but they possess at the very least a death shrug. The combination of the awful number of short branches on the family tree, and Catholicism's teaching that the moment of our death is chosen for us, seems to have resulted in an unusually severe degree of fatalism.

The arrogant fevour which has been such a feature of the family's activities — the apparent belief that they can get away with anything — has been attributed by their critics to wealth and expensive lawyers. A more charitable reading would be that their family history teaches above all the family of caution and making plans.

This is finally, however, a story about the inevitable diminishing returns of dynasties. (An appropriate one in the week when further flirtations were reported between Sonia Gandhi and India Congress Party, which took her late mother-in-law and her late husband to power.) The central problem for the Kennedys, as for the Gandhis, has been that an impossible model was imposed on the descendants. Joe Kennedy Sr tried to bring to the American presidency a royal system of

lineage. As a Kennedy sings in Stephen Sondheim's musical *Merrily We Roll Along*: "One day elections will be unknown/As each of our kids will ascend the throne."

But the problem with a democratic dynasty (although Old Joe believed that elections could be helped along) is that it lacks the essential qualifying element: inevitable continuation. Britain's Royal Family has experienced most of the reverses of the Kennedys — scandals, alcoholics, mavericks, wastrels and gruesome premature deaths — but these have proved containable because, for Britain's leading family, power is not an aspiration but a fact. No real prince is required first to get back the crown as were these quasi-princes.

The end of Michael Kennedy's life held haunting echoes of the deaths of his father and uncle in the 1960s. A local Catholic priest rushing to the hospital past the TV crews; the children gruesomely witnessing their father's final moments, though this time, even more painfully in person rather than on film. The essential difference is that this death was a simple accident. This isn't, though, a

### Laurie Lee was in Brigades

I WOULD like to contribute to the debate on Laurie Lee's participation in the Spanish Civil War. While conducting research into the fate of non-Russian communists who perished in Russia or at the hands of Soviet agents outside the USSR, I examined, in 1984, files of the International Brigades now housed in Moscow's Comintern archive.

One such dossier, with the intriguing title "List, short characteristics of deserters, Trotskyites, criminals and other unreliable persons of English nationality", contained two documents on Laurie Lee's early days in war-torn Spain.

In the first of these, Bob Doyle, a Dublin-born communist whom I had the pleasure to meet in London in 1981, wrote of how he had been put in charge of a group of English-speaking volunteers from Paris to Figueras. Doyle roundly condemned the drunken behaviour of those under his supervision en route, but singled out "Lawrence Lee" for special mention during the latter's short stay in Figueras. Lee had suffered from fits; his conduct, however, was "excellent", and he showed "willingness to comply with regulations".

The second document, by an American officer (C-D) on December 15, 1937, concerned the transfer of the volunteer group from Figueras to Albacete, the headquarters of the Brigades. The three British volunteers condemned by Doyle received equally damning "characterisations" (an integral part of communist "cadre control") from C-D as well — drunkenness, urinating in their billets, refusing to drill etc. However, in a postscript, Lee was again depicted as a positive example for others, although suffering from epilepsy, his conduct was "exemplary", he was "willing to do his best for the revolution" and was "politically a communist". The American recommended that Lee be given a post that was "not strenuous" at some base camp of the International Brigades, as he seemed "a responsible person and trustworthy".

A further search in the archive may throw light on what Lee really did after completing his training in Albacete, but the evidence clearly proves that he did join the International Brigades in December 1937. (Dr) Barry McLoughlin,  
Jadengasse 4/23,  
1150 Vienna,  
Austria.

## The diminishing returns of dynasties



Mark Lawson

THE burden of the Kennedy family is captured in two phrases. The first is a 1970s American black joke, a version of those stupid-question put-downs about whether the Pope is a Catholic: "Does Rose Kennedy have a black dress?" The second phrase is the author Dominick Dunne's description of the demons which afflict Senator Edward Kennedy: "He has walked behind too many coffins."

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But another traditional element in the makeup of Kennedy males has been recklessness, not always fuelled by alcohol. While Jack and Bobby died as a result of a standard risk accepted by all senior politicians, their political careers and sex lives showed a fascination with invincible trouble.

In resulting from an accident while playing what is described as the family's "own version" of golf on the glamorous slopes of Aspen, Colorado, Michael's death again brought together the two central elements of a Kennedy life: money and recklessness.

Perhaps this carelessness about consequences was a built-in aspect of their character. Their experiences, though, may also be to blame. Michael and his siblings and cousins, the third generation of the clan to become famous, grew up with a gallery of ancestral role models unmatched in history. The tales of fathers, aunts and uncles included two political assassinations captured live on camera, two plane crashes (one military, one civilian) and incarceration in an institution after a failed lobotomy. It would be unfair to say

that the younger Kennedys have a death wish, but they possess at the very least a death shrug. The combination of the awful number of short branches on the family tree, and Catholicism's teaching that the moment of our death is chosen for us, seems to have resulted in an unusually severe degree of fatalism.

The arrogant fevour which has been such a feature of the family's activities — the apparent belief that they can get away with anything — has been attributed by their critics to wealth and expensive lawyers. A more charitable reading would be that their family history teaches above all the family of caution and making plans.

This is finally, however, a story about the inevitable diminishing returns of dynasties. (An appropriate one in the week when further flirtations were reported between Sonia Gandhi and India Congress Party, which took her late mother-in-law and her late husband to power.) The central problem for the Kennedys, as for the Gandhis, has been that an impossible model was imposed on the descendants. Joe Kennedy Sr tried to bring to the American presidency a royal system of

lineage. As a Kennedy sings in Stephen Sondheim's musical *Merrily We Roll Along*: "One day elections will be unknown/As each of our kids will ascend the throne."

But the problem with a democratic dynasty (although Old Joe believed that elections could be helped along) is that it lacks the essential qualifying element: inevitable continuation. Britain's Royal Family has experienced most of the reverses of the Kennedys — scandals, alcoholics, mavericks, wastrels and gruesome premature deaths — but these have proved containable because, for Britain's leading family, power is not an aspiration but a fact. No real prince is required first to get back the crown as were these quasi-princes.

The end of Michael Kennedy's life held haunting echoes of the deaths of his father and uncle in the 1960s. A local Catholic priest rushing to the hospital past the TV crews; the children gruesomely witnessing their father's final moments, though this time, even more painfully in person rather than on film. The essential difference is that this death was a simple accident. This isn't, though, a

time which believes in accidents — witness the conspiracy theories on the various Diana websites and in the Islamic press — and so it would be logical to expect paranoid spin to be put on the tragedy in Aspen: the inexplicable abashment on the snowy night, the stranger wearing a sun shirt even though it was cold.

But the likelihood is that the conspiracy geeks won't bother with this one. For the brutal truth is that, for the first time in the family's ragged, the victim's political ambitions were already over and, these days, no one would think a Kennedy worth killing. So far has American history departed from Joe's scheme that the President who phoned the family to offer his condolences over Michael was a poor Southern boy who made it to the White House without ever having known his father and who manoeuvred the Democratic Party away from the liberal policies of Teddy Kennedy.

Chased down the generations by ambition and tragedy, Michael's children may at least come to have the consolation that to reverse a popular conceit — the legend burned out long before the candle ever did.



# After the Shah, an endless dance of revolution

**Commentary**  
**Martin Woollacott**

THE extraordinary events that led to the Iranian revolution began 20 years ago this month with an article in the semi-official Tehran newspaper, Ettela'at, attacking Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as, among other things, a creature of the British. Seldom in history can a piece of black propaganda have gone so badly wrong. When students in the religious city of Qom gathered in protest, the security forces killed 70 of them. So was established the rapid cycle of blood, mourning, and revenge that brought the Shah down in one bewildering year.

At the time, the Iranian upheaval was compared with the French and Russian revolutions. Two decades later it looks more like a convulsion in Iran's own eccentric and special history than a political model for others. But the international implications of that convulsion were nevertheless huge. The fact that a Shiite revolution gave a push to the development of Sunni fundamentalism is probably less important than the way in which it re-arranged the international politics of the Middle East. Two Gulf wars came out of it, for Saddam Hussein would almost certainly not have attacked Iran had Iran and the United States not been so much at odds, and he might not have prevailed in the conflict if he had not had American help. And, if he had not prevailed, the second Gulf War would not have happened.

Relations within the Iraq-Iran-America triangle may well have been more important in determining events in the Middle East than those within the Israel-YO-America triangle. The most recent consequence has been America's effort to "contain" both Iraq and Iran while attempting to persuade Israel into a peace with the Palestinians. This is a policy so ambitious and complicated that it is not surprising that even a superpower has faltered in putting it into practice.

The most striking thing about Iran after 20 years is how little the issues have changed. At home, Iran still falls short of any synthesis between its religious and its liberal traditions, while managing to maintain, it must be said, a system that has a genuine democratic dimension. Abroad, it has yet to find any middle way in its relations with America and Europe, or even with most of its neighbours, while the problem with Iraq cannot be solved until Saddam is gone.

Iran's politics, in which clerics and a few religious laymen have to try to meet the needs of a population that wants a whole range of "modern" things from more stable prices to better TV, and from freedom to travel abroad to greater opportunities for women, exhibits the same contradictions. The Iranian constitutional gridlock, which can set a popularly elected president against a religious leader appointed for life, or against an undisciplined parliament, is also unchanged, as is the existence of a range of centres of power outside the government proper. You could not have designed a constitution or political system better if your aim had been to ensure that nothing was ever resolved, or that reform and reaction would dance an endless dance into the far future.

Thus the constantly recurring theme of the popular, or relatively popular, elected leader stymied in his purposes. Around the new Iranian president, Mohammad Khatami, swept into office last May on a wave of support from Iran's youth, women, and the minorities, gather the same vague hopes and expectations that once centred on Abolhasan Bani Sadr and Mehdi Bazargan, moderate leaders of the early years of the revolution, and on Rafsanjani, the last president before Khatami. There are even some similarities between those hopes and those that focused on the Shah's one or two independent minded prime ministers over the years, including Shahpour Bakhtiar, the moderate politician who persuaded the Shah to leave and whose 11th-hour attempt to set up a government of the centre failed in early 1979. Perhaps Khatami can succeed where they failed. If so he will disprove the thesis that, if there is one consistent principle of Iranian politics, it is that the centre does not hold.

The hopes and fears of the year of revolution are brought to life again in a new book by Desmond Harney, a former British diplomat who was an unusually well-informed banker and businessman living in Tehran throughout the whole period. Written at the time, his journal of the 12 months that began with the Ettela'at article and ended with cars honking their way through the capital to the chant of "Shah rogh" ("The Shah has left") is very evocative of those jagged times. It brings back the fertile atmosphere of a city where you could walk, in a few hundred yards, from a street where people were patiently queuing for bread to a square where troops had just cleared of demonstrators, where one day the main thoroughfares were full of the usual rush-hour traffic and the next of immense processions of solemn, set of purpose marchers. Harney recalls the "great beat of sound" as the cry of "Allah-Akbar" went up from the rooftops after curfew, a manifestation of popular hostility to the Shah's regime that could neither be denied or controlled.

The book serves as a reminder of how much the Iranian revolution was a jolt of surprises, and how to the end most observers fought against the likely outcome. In September, Harney was writing that perhaps "the Iranian establishment can sort out things for themselves ... and ... will only dispense with the Shah if they have no alternative". In November: "Perhaps we are seeing a nation dragged back to its own reality and away from a vision which was at the same time a delusion. So it's back to the Middle East for Iran and farewell to the Big League adventure" of the Shah's modernisation programme. By December, "the greatest weakness ... or even the government, have a tendency toward reconciliation with the West and America". Khatami's relatively liberal speech to the Islamic summit last month was followed quite quickly by the revival of rumours that Ayatollah Ali Montazeri might be tried for treason and by the arrest of Ibrahim Yazdi, a former foreign minister associated with Montazeri. All this ayatollah politics needs decoding. Montazeri, once seen as likely to become the supreme religious leader, holds the view that the leader should "guide rather than rule", meaning that under normal circumstances the elected president should govern. This, then, is the Iranian way of edging closer to the questions of who rightfully rules, of how to separate religious and political matters, and how to weigh democracy against religious authority.

# Men of the renaissance

Nearly four years after the ANC's election victory in South Africa and despite calls for reconciliation, the need for the transformation of the economy is stirring up accusations of anti-white sentiment. **Anthony Sampson** reports on the difficult period of transition which the country now faces as an emerging, multi-racial democracy

HOW can a black revolutionary movement, forged by 40 years of struggle against white supremacy, transform itself into a multiracial ruling party, to run a sophisticated industrial economy? How can a new generation of leaders, without the aura of the struggle, restrain the pressures towards populism, and maintain a tolerant democracy and when so many African governments have noticeably failed?

These were the fundamental questions behind the 50th conference of the African National Congress last December, and the marathon speech of its outgoing president, Nelson Mandela. It was widely reported as an anti-white tirade, a complete break with Mandela's past reconciliation.

In fact it was a careful report on the party's problems after three years of government; and it was designed to establish continuity under the new president, Thabo Mbeki — who wrote much of the speech — while Mandela endorsed it by insisting on

living standards to help the poor. The Liberal Democratic Party said the speech marked Mandela's low water mark.

And many British papers took up the cue. The Daily Telegraph called it a "depressingly paranoid tirade". The Independent called it the "cry of 'Allah-Akbar' and 'antiquated gibberish'". Even the Observer, Mandela's old ally, called it a "profoundly depressing assault".

It was certainly a party-political speech, designed to rally the ANC in preparation for the elections in April 1999, against "the miserable platoon of opponents". The African National Party aimed at "the total destruction of our organisation". The new United Democratic Party, a coalition of white and black dissidents, included "some of the most backward and corrupt elements of our society".

But the attacks were not anti-white. Mandela urged the ANC to spend more time attracting white voters, including Afrikaners, and mobilising all sectors of the population. The real test of the ANC's racial attitudes was in the voting for the national executive. Many observers forecast beforehand that the ANC under Mbeki's rule would become more "Africanist", more intolerant of white and Indian allies; and that the 3,500 delegates, nearly all Africans, would favour African candidates.

The existing executive on the platform came from every racial background. They included the Muslim Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar; the Minister for Water, Kader Asmal, the ex-professor of law in Dublin who sounds Irish; the coloured Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, who looks white; the white deputy defence minister Ronnie Kasrils who sounds English.

Mandela tried to explain the harsh new global marketplace in which South Africans must now operate

speaking it himself, for four-and-a-half hours. It was critical of nearly everyone. Mandela warned his own followers (to loud applause) of the dangers of corruption and greed in the money-making environment. He warned against the "recrimination" of politicians who sought to exploit their positions for profit. He pointed to the rest of Africa, with its "predatory élites" which had looted the national wealth, and entrenched corruption — which South Africans could never accept. And he called for a "moral renewal" that could achieve an African renaissance.

He tried to explain the harsh new global marketplace in which South Africans must now operate, quoting George Soros and David Rockefeller, who have warned that international business must accept more social responsibility for its consequences. His greatest concern was with the slow pace of "transformation" and black empowerment. It was this that hit the headlines; but much of it was obvious. Any visitor can see that South Africa, nearly four years after the ANC's election victory, still looks like a white man's country, with white bosses in charge nearly everywhere.

Mandela is still totally committed to reconciliation: but as he told parliament a year ago, it must be a two-way process. Whites cannot expect to carry on business as usual, maintaining their old hierarchies at the top. True reconciliation must include transformation, to allow blacks their fair share of management, skills and promotion. The blacks, said Mandela in his speech, want "not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and a result". (His quotation was from Lyndon Johnson in 1965.) But the social transformation in South Africa had only just begun.

Mandela warned that it will be faced with a counter-offensive whose strength was still to be tested. And he sees a sinister element behind the resistance to black empowerment, with a "counter-revolutionary network", including Afrikaner right-wingers, who are deliberately trying to erode confidence, subvert the economy and use crime to make South Africa ungovernable. Such a conspiracy has never been proven. Radical journalists, who would love to reveal it, have not been given the evidence. But the police and intelligence services do show clear signs of deep penetration by well-organised criminal forces, who have been stealing weapons from the National Defence Force and computers from the brand-new intelligence headquarters.

"We don't know everything we should about this situation," Mbeki said at the conference, "but it's a very serious problem." Even without a masterplan, there are clearly many local networks and pockets of resistance to change, within the public service and his companies. In any case, Mandela thinks the white bosses have not fulfilled their side of their bargain of reconciliation. But most white businessmen see it quite differently. They think they have done enough by abandoning apartheid, and are already fed up with the pressures to promote blacks. They are worried that South Africa will go the way of Zimbabwe, where Mugabe is now expropriating white farms, 16 years after he came to power. But Mbeki believes that unless his government can show changes now, it will be forced (like Mugabe) to take more extreme steps later.

It is this deadlock which underlines both Mandela's radical speech, and the fervent white South African reaction. The conservative Citizen newspaper said Mandela had destroyed much of the sympathy he had built up since he took office. Business Day warned that "Mandela is naive if he thinks whites will voluntarily take a drop in

They seemed very vulnerable. It had been primarily the challenge and camaraderie of the struggle against apartheid which had brought Indians, Coloureds and whites alongside Africans, and now the unity of the struggle was beginning to fade. And they had all made unpopular decisions, to control their budgets and support the government's economic policy which supports privatisation, encourages foreign investment and has antagonised the unions and the Communist Party who attacked the policy as "Thatcherite".

They were all exposed to the Afrikanists who were complaining that the ANC's revolutionary purpose was being diluted by non-Africans, not least to Winnie Mandela who enjoys stirring up anti-Indian feeling, and likes to call her African enemies "Fetis". Yet the vote at the end of the conference showed a decisive endorsement of the rainbow government, and racial tolerance. The top vote went to Cyril Ramaphosa, Mbeki's chief rival, who had negotiated the settlement with the Afrikaner government and is now a leading businessman. Asmal, Manuel, Omar and Kasrils all increased their vote. Among the top 10, only



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High street revives but rates may have to rise ● Car sales likely to dip

Saturday Notebook

## Speculators turn sights on Europe



Mark Milner

ASIA's central bankers must be getting fed up with finding their currencies in the speculators' sights. Yesterday, the Malaysian ringgit, the Philippine peso and the Indonesian rupiah were all on the skids again. Not to worry. Help may be at hand, from a majority of members of the European Union.

The genus of the Asian currency crisis lay in the fact that many Southeast Asian countries had effectively pegged their currencies to the dollar. That gave the speculators a fixed target at which to aim because central banks felt obliged to spend their foreign exchange reserves defending them.

Now that most of the links have been broken, the speculators will be looking for fresh opportunities. Europe could fit the bill. The likely 11-strong group set to sign up for the first wave of monetary union at the beginning of next year are scheduled to pencil in as early as May the parties at which their currencies will subsequently be merged into the euro.

As a result, the speculators will have a thick end of eight miles in which to try their luck against a whole range of targets whether the parties chosen are based, say, on either existing central rates in the exchange rate mechanism or some more market-related method.

There are good enough reasons for giving markets timely warning. Simply picking the market rate on the last trading day of this coming December would, for example, open up opportunities for manipulation.

But the current strategy does carry risk. Currency fluctuations is by no means dead, though to be fair it is far more muted than it once was among the countries most likely to make the single currency first time round.

That, however, is based on the increasing market perception that the political will behind monetary union will be sufficient to see it to fruition. The real test is yet to come.

The world's currency players may be convinced monetary union is going to happen on time with a credible number of countries making the starting line up.

It may prove a different matter when they start to see actual numbers — both the economic data on which members are chosen and the parties at which their currencies will be locked in. It could soon be time to fasten seatbelts, there is bound to be turbulence ahead.

## Horse trading

SPREADING MAY, it will be interesting to see if Europe's leaders have by then got round to deciding just who will run the European central bank — becoming, arguably, one of the most powerful (and least accountable) figures in Europe.

France's decision to put forward Jean-Claude Trichet, the head of the country's central bank, in opposition to the candidacy of Wim Duisenberg, the current head of the European Monetary Institute and the man initially expected to be a shoe-in for the ECB job, has already meant intense lobbying among the governments of the member states which will decide the issue of who will head Europe's central bank.

And the horse trading over the ECB is likely to embrace the election process for the presidency of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development where Jacques de Larosière is due to step down from the presidency at the end of the month. Though the EBRD is by no means an exclusively European preserve, European Union member states do control a majority of the votes.

The Belgian newspaper De Standard yesterday came up with an interesting variation on a theme already floated by the country's finance minister Philippe Maystadt — that the first eight-year presidency at the ECB should be shared between Mr Duisenberg and Mr Trichet.

On the face of it, the split turn might appear to be some attraction. It can at least be billed as a compromise which would avoid some unseemly public squabbling over Euro-jobs for the boys — though the squabbling will still go on in private over the EBRD and later, the two posts at the European Investment Bank.

Central bank hawks — a common enough breed in Europe these days — are unlikely to be impressed, however. Both Mr Duisenberg and Mr Trichet are highly regarded but the position of the ECB president was designed to reassure financial markets that the man or woman at the top would be independent of political pressure. The chosen was to give the institution only one term in office but to make it a long one.

Consequently, splitting the term between Mr Duisenberg and Mr Trichet in direct response to French political pressure is hardly likely to aid to the credibility of presidential independence. Indeed, there are those who would argue that the French put forward Mr Trichet's name in the first place precisely because the administration was concerned about the absence of political accountability.

With Britain having taken on the EU presidency for the next six months, the role of honest broker in the affair of the ECB president has fallen to Tony Blair. Tricky.

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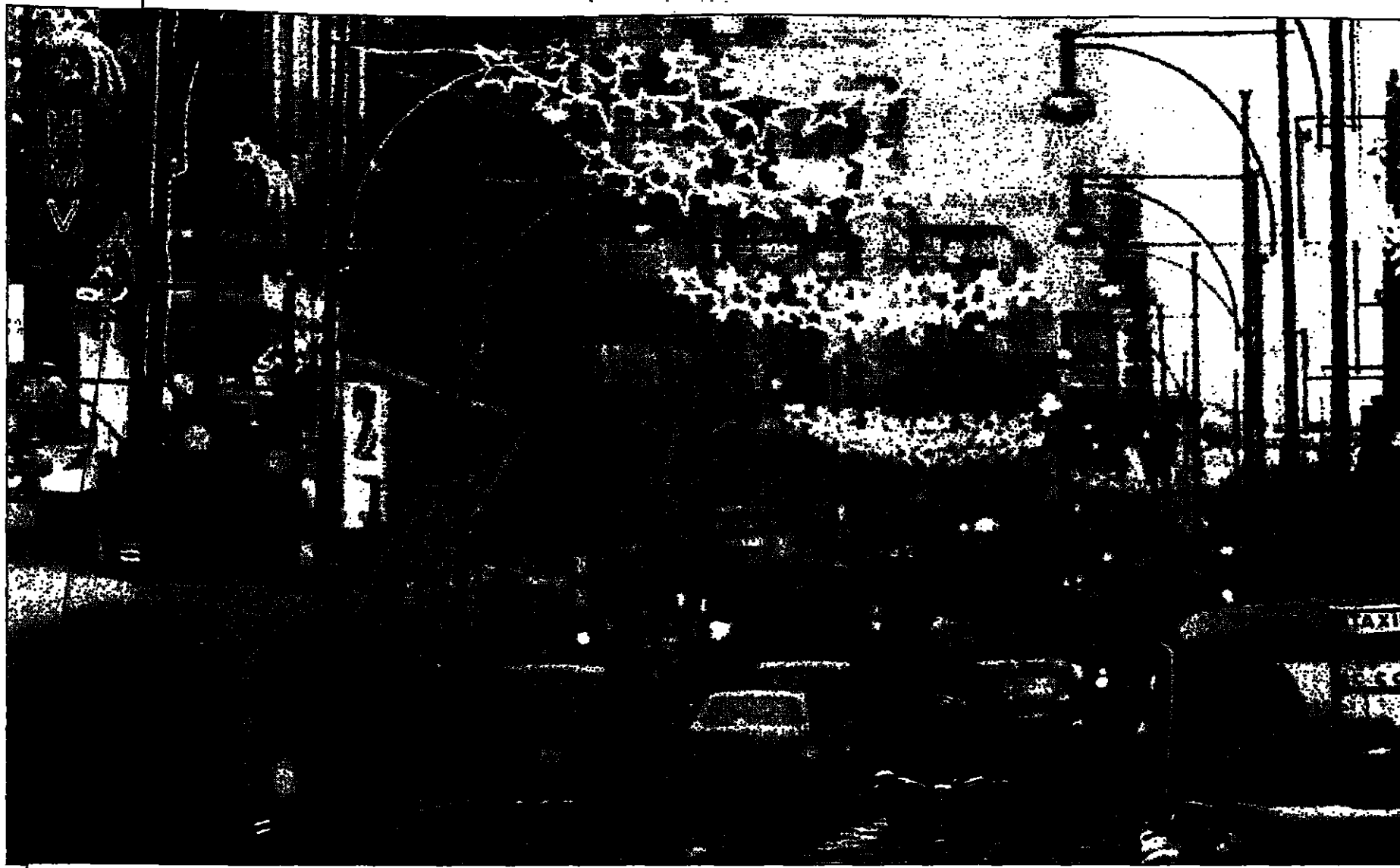
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Shopping spree... Customers flock to Oxford Street in London's West End turning retailers' frowns to smiles

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GOWAN

## Dash lifts gloom for shops

Charlotte Denny and Mark Atkinson

SIGNS that the UK consumer remains unbowed by five increases in the cost of borrowing since the election emerged yesterday, raising fears that interest rates may have to rise again in 1998.

A last-minute dash by shoppers appears to have saved retailers from what threatened to be a gloomy Christmas, according to new figures.

Leading retailer John

Lewis reported yesterday that pre-Christmas sales were up 8 per cent and that its winter sale had an "excellent start," with most branches doubling last year's increase in turnover on the first day.

Separate figures showed that consumer lending rebounded in November after several slow months. The Bank of England reported that net lending to individuals was £1.3 billion over the month, the largest figure since February.

The strength in consumer credit back in November shows the UK consumer is very much alive and kicking.

ing," said Mark Wall at investment bank Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

But Dharshini David of HSBC markets pointed out that the rise in lending had not financed a spurge on the high streets. Credit card borrowing had actually fallen in November, to £330 million from £350 million the previous month. Ms David said this was reflected in the 2.9 per cent month-on-month fall in sales of clothing and footwear in November. "A large proportion of these goods tend to be financed by plastic,"

Ms David said the growth

had occurred in non-card lending by banks and others. "This could partly reflect the strength of car sales which were at the highest level ever recorded in November."

Record car sales are unlikely to last, according to Autoglass, the windshield company, its latest survey suggests the car industry is set to go from boom to gloom in the space of a few short months.

The number of people planning to change cars in 1998 has dropped by a third over the last year, according to the Autoglass Car Confidence Index. "After a bumper year in

1997, it looks as if the forecasts are going to be very quiet," said Ashley Jagoe, manager of Autoglass.

Analysts warned that the Christmas cheer could be short-lived for the retail sector as well. "The John Lewis figures suggest last-minute Christmas sales were probably good," said Ms David. "But it is too early to say. Initial figures last year were misleading. Sales will probably be flatish overall, weighing up early evidence."

The Bank of England's monetary policy committee, which has day-to-day control over interest rates, is due to

meet next week for the first time this year.

No change in the cost of borrowing is expected following figures two weeks ago showing a downward revision to the economy's growth rate in the third quarter of last year.

However, analysts believe another increase in rates could be on the cards in February if the economy shows further signs of reviving.

More trading statements from individual retailers are due next week and the Confederation of British Industry will be publishing its monthly distributive trades survey.

## More misery on the way for home owners

Teresa Hunter

HIGHER home loan repayments were yesterday announced for more than half a million Alliance & Leicester borrowers, with further mortgage misery on the way for millions of building society customers.

Britain's sixth biggest mortgage lender had pledged not to ruin Christmas by upping its rates before the festivities. But it yesterday moved swiftly to raise its rate to 8.7 per cent, adding nearly £10 per month to the cost of a typical £50,000 home loan immediately for new borrowers and from Monday for existing customers.

The 2.5 million borrowers with the Halifax, Britain's biggest mortgage company, who also kicked off the new year with a mortgage rate rise to 8.7 per cent on Thursday, were given nearly a month's warning that higher bills were on the way.

Other big lenders, such as the Abbey National, Cheltenham & Gloucester and Woolwich moved their mortgage rates before Christmas, after the Bank of England raised base lending costs for the fifth time since the elections.

A £50,000 Alliance & Leicester endowment loan now costs £54.98 more monthly than when Labour

came to power and an £80,000 borrower is £31.23 out of pocket.

The reprieve from mortgage pain which leading building societies such as the Nationwide, Bradford & Bingley and Yorkshire had offered borrowers, could also soon be over.

The Nationwide pledged in December that repayments would not rise unless the Bank of England lifted base rates again. That could happen as early as next week when its monetary policy committee reconvenes, although some analysts believe it will wait until February to take decisive action.

However, if base rates do climb, the Nationwide will be forced to raise its mortgage rate by up to 0.5 per cent from its current 8.1 per cent.

The days of the even cheaper mortgages of 7.95 per cent at the Bradford & Bingley are also numbered. Britain's second biggest remaining building society indicated that it would not increase mortgage bills until February 1, but its borrowers can expect a rapid increase after that of up to 0.5 per cent.

The Yorkshire, which also charges 7.95 per cent, is currently reviewing its mortgage rate, and expects to move later in January, but possibly by less than 0.5 per cent.

## Rifkind joins Clarke in boardroom



Rifkind: new directorship

Lisa Buckingham City Editor

FORMER Foreign Secretary Sir Malcolm Rifkind yesterday signed up for another City directorship which will see him sitting cheek by jowl in the boardroom alongside his erstwhile cabinet colleague, Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor in the last government.

Foreign and Colonial Emerging Markets Investment Trust said Sir Malcolm's "breadth of experience and knowledge" would make a valuable contribution to the company.

Sir Malcolm, who lost his

parliamentary seat in the last election, is a non-executive at Ramco, the ambitious energy group which recently admitted defeat in a £25 million bid for JXJ Oil and Gas.

It is believed Sir Malcolm will receive about £18,000 a year — roughly the same as Mr Clarke is being paid by the company for his non-executive duties.

The investment group did not say exactly where Sir Malcolm's experience was expected to help, although a source said: "You've got to think that it will be useful to a company looking at overseas investments to have someone with international experience in the boardroom."

In addition to his two-year tenure as Foreign Secretary, Sir Malcolm was Secretary for Defence and served as a minister from 1978 to 1997.

Some City head hunters expressed surprise that Sir Malcolm did not swiftly land a range of trophy appointments after the election defeat.

But others predicted that he, along with many senior figures from the former government, would find it harder to tread the well-worn path from the Tory benches to the Square Mile, partly because their scarcity value had been diminished but also because their political influence was held to be marginal thanks to the Labour landslide.

## £8bn gas claim settled

Don Atkinson

THE biggest damages claim — totalling £8 billion — ever heard under English law has been settled, removing a question mark over Italian participation in economic and monetary union.

At the heart of the complex settlement is a "swap" arrangement involving billions of cubic metres of Russian and Nigerian gas.

On one side of the legal action was Italy's nationalised ENEL electricity corporation, in partnership with gas corporation Snam, on the other was the Nigerian government, in consort with

Shell, France's ELF and AGIP of Italy, partners in the liquid natural gas consortium Nigeria LNG.

The sums in dispute were so large they could have pushed Italy's public debt to levels that would have ruled out EMU entry.

The case, which was being heard in Geneva under English law, revolved around a 1992 contract between Nigeria LNG and ENEL, which agreed to take 20 years' worth of gas starting in 1993. At the Nigerian end, infrastructure was put in place and part of the deal was that Italy would install port facilities to receive the gas.

In 1996, ENEL alleged the

new left-wing Olive Tree coalition government had altered the political climate to such an extent that the port facilities could no longer be built. Nigeria LNG went to law under the auspices of international arbitration.

Under the settlement, Italy will no longer have to build a port. Instead, the gas will be shipped to the Gaz de France terminal at Montoir de Bretagne in north-western France and then shifted into central France, where it will be used for French consumption. Meanwhile, a similar quantity of Russian gas — 3.5 billion cubic metres a year — that had been bound for France will be piped to Italy.

## OFT to rule on Bauer bid in race for IPC

Celia Weston

GOVERNMENT ministers will be told by the end of this month whether to give the green light to the proposed acquisition of Reed Elsevier's consumer magazine business by German-owned publishing group Heinrich Bauer.

Last weekend Venture capital company CINVEN appeared to be in pole position as it prepared to back a £900 million management buy-out of Reed Elsevier's IPC magazine stable — whose 74 titles include TV Times, Woman's Own, Loaded and New Musical Express.

But on the last day of 1997 the Office of Fair Trading was notified of Bauer's proposed acquisition. The OFT has until the end of this month to consider the implications and advise Trade and Industry Secretary Margaret Beckett whether to clear the deal.

Although notification to the OFT does not mean the privately-owned group is the only potential buyer, its acquisition of the UK's largest consumer publishing group is thought to play to the strengths of Heinrich Bauer whose UK subsidiary is best known for consumer titles such as TV Quick and Bella.

Reed Elsevier is thought to be keen to complete the sale quickly.

## Asian film fans help Titanic avoid disaster

Christopher Hood in Los Angeles

HOLLYWOOD blockbuster films broke box-office records in 1997 as most forecasters were proved wrong.

Dirge predictions about Titanic (picture, right), at \$200 million the most expensive film ever made, were circulating nearly two years ago and last summer, when its opening was postponed until December, the film was virtually written off. But rescue is at hand.

A glut of blockbusters all costing over \$100 million also seemed likely to suffer damaging losses, and in

fact four did flop: Batman and Robin, The Postman, Speed 2: Cruise Control and Starship Troopers. But no studio suffered enough to cause the crisis expected.

What many observers in Europe and the US forgot was Asia's huge market of young film lovers. They resented Kevin Costner's troubled epic Waterworld in 1995-1996, and they are apparently saving Titanic — and director James Cameron — as it draws in Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, US it has already made \$100 million.

Sony-Columbia's light adventure story, Men in Black, grossed more than

\$200 million, closely followed by Steven Spielberg's dinosaur sequel, The Lost World. Twelve other films

topped \$100 million, including Julia Roberts' comeback comedy, My Best Friend's Wedding, and the



Harrison Ford vehicle, Air Force One.

Although Hollywood prospered, ticket sales were flat and increased admission prices brought the profits. At 150 worldwide distributions, too many movies were offered. This year the number could drop below 100. Disney is cutting its output from 40 to 20.

The success of Titanic may make it more difficult for studios to cut costs. "It becomes more difficult for mid-level studio executives to say no to another director like Cameron," said Tom Sherak, executive vice-president at Fox, which jointly financed Titanic.

## TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.47	France 9.85	Italy 2.80	Singapore 2.72
Austria 23.54	Germany 2.88	Malta 0.533	South Africa 7.95
Belgium 29.82	Greece 468.37	Netherlands 3.24	Spain 243.25
Canada 2.32	Hong Kong 12.59	New Zealand 2.77	Sweden 12.06
Cyprus 0.949	India 65.65	Norway 11.85	Switzerland 1.34
Denmark 11.09	Ireland 1.127	Portugal 294.20	Turkey 328.970
Finland 8.83	Israel 5.91	Saudi Arabia 6.11	USA 1.82

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

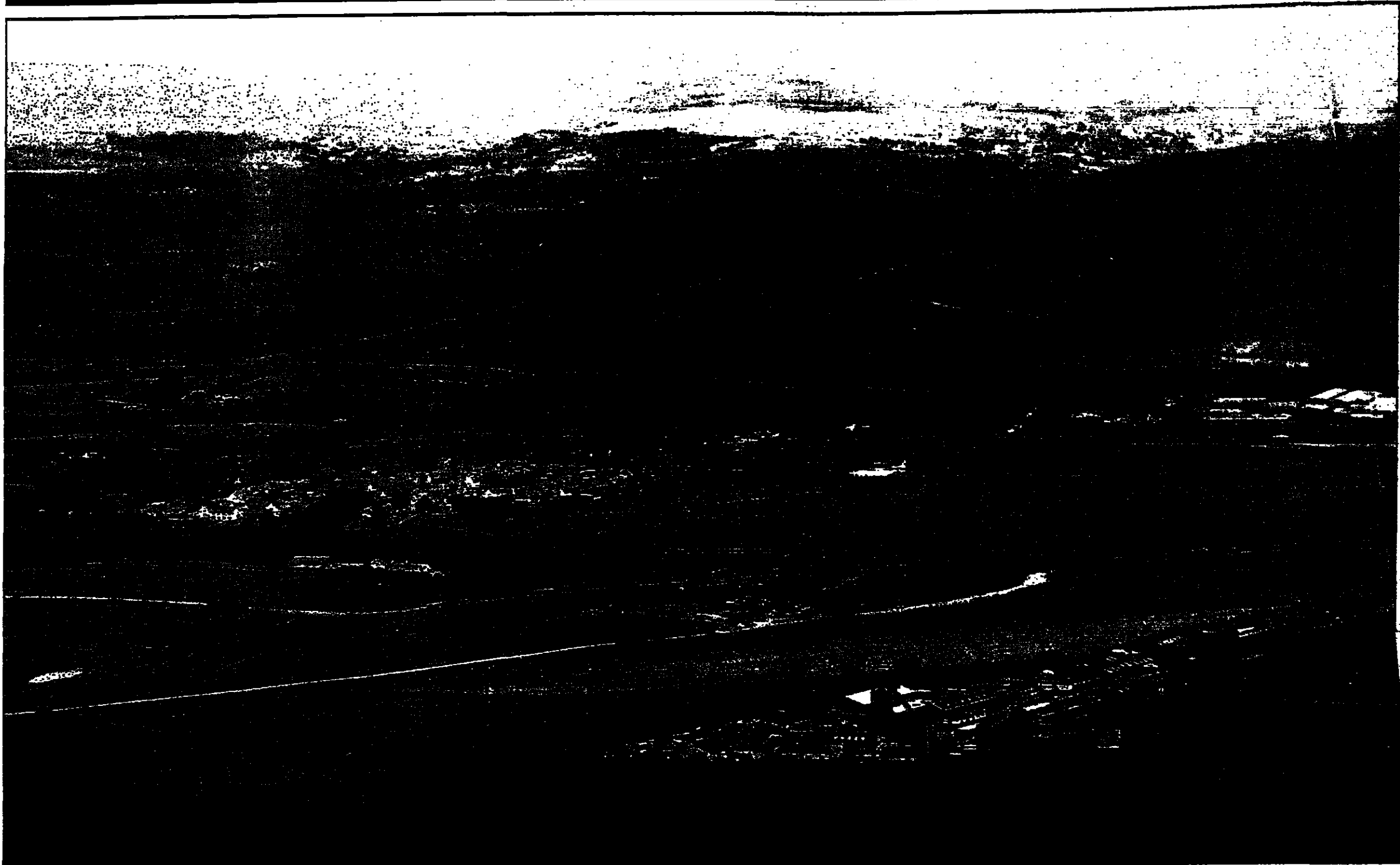


Last-minute spree raises rate fears, page 11

De Beers equals diamonds equals news, page 10

## FinanceGuardian

## Death throes of coal



Faded from black... Employee-owned Tower Colliery, with Rhigos village and the Brecon Beacons in the background, could become a heritage trail site if deep-mined coal's future cannot be secured

PHOTOGRAPHS: JEFF MORGAN

## Painful glory is not enough

There's little room for sentiment as Britain's pits fight for survival.  
DAVID GOW reports

IN THE dreary hills above Hirwaun, where the low clouds meet the moorland mist, the pit-head tower emerges from the post-Christ-mas gloom like a sepulchre. Tower Colliery is not a ghost from the past of Britain's rich mining history but a vibrant business, a unique example of worker-capitalism reborn exactly three years ago when 239 miners marched back up the mountain to reclaim as their own the last deep mine in Wales.

Then, they sang the Red Flag and the Internationale as they followed the National Union of Mineworkers' banners. Now, as the mist grows more dense, they emerge from the coalface quietly confident about the prospects for 1998.

"We've had some problems. Geological and production difficulties held us back, but we've overcome them and now we are catching up, racing to meet the huge demand for our coal," a development engineer says — just one worker from an entire day-shift brought in from the extended holiday to cut coal.

In Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire the mood among RJB Mining's employees is altogether bleaker as they begin the new year.

The Government may have intervened at the last gasp for RJB by extending its contracts with National Power, PowerGen and Eastern to the end of June. But nobody, least of all the miners who have moved from pit to pit in recent years, believes the deal brought anything but temporary relief from the threat of a further 5,000 job losses and the closure of up to eight collieries.

Where Tower workers believe their jobs could last another eight, 10, perhaps even 15 years, the question hangs

over RJB collieries is this: Will 1998 mark the end of the industry after nearly 200 years of painful glory?

Miners occupy a special place in the hearts and minds of British people. For Margaret Thatcher they were "the enemy within". For another Tory former prime minister, Harold Macmillan, they were "lions led by donkeys" in the 1984-1985 strike. But many would share George Orwell's view that "it is only because miners sweat their guts out that superior persons can remain superior".

Perhaps no more. The princes of the Labour movement have become the playthings of the liberalised energy markets. Brassed off.

"Galloping for gas" protagonists and PowerGen chairman, Ed Wallis has no sympathy for miners. "If you have got dirty coal and want to clean up emissions from power stations, the obvious policy is to leave the coal in the ground," he told Parliamentary Review last month in an interview.

He views unsentimentally the collapse of the bulk of an industry that employed more than a million at the start of the 1925 general strike and 750,000 when coal was nationalised 51 years ago.

PowerGen, a reluctant party to December's deal with RJB, is still holding out in negotiations with the mining group's chief executive, Richard Budge, over the new three-year supply contracts. Last year it bought 12 million tonnes; now it wants at most 3 million tonnes a year.

Like the other two generators, it is extracting a competitive price for what little coal it wants — that is, nearer the world market figure of just over £1 per gigajoule, compared with the £1.45 Mr Budge commanded in the first three years after he

bought the deep mines for £815 million in 1994.

Industry analysts reckon new contracts with National Power and Eastern slashed not only RJB's tonnage but its revenue. By the time PowerGen signs, RJB could find its contracted sales to generators cut from 29 million to only 10 million tonnes a year. Small wonder that it may have some 10 million tonnes excess capacity and that its share price this week hit a year's low of 130p.

But RJB's travails are no comfort to Tyrone O'Sullivan, chairman of Tower Colliery, who can boast pre-tax returns of 20 per cent on sales of £22 million and of quietly paying off the £10 million owed to the state for the pit.

Sitting in his scruffy office, he is proud that the pit manages to sell all the 560,000 tonnes a year it produces and has increased its workforce from 239 to 350. "There's no

magical formula for our success, it's just been hard graft," he says. But he makes clear the firm's success is founded on employee shareholding.

This loyalty, reflected in a near-total lack of absenteeism and exemplary safety record, contrasts with the mood at RJB, where Budge is warning employees that there will be no pay rise until at least April — apart from a £500 bonus for the low-paid.

His latest letter to employees talks bluntly of "targeting cost-reductions, consistent quality and improving customer relationships and better co-operation among employees". He continues: "It is fundamental to receiving government support that we can demonstrate our commitment to total cost-competitiveness in years to come."

That cost 1,600 men their jobs last year, and this year output will be down from

29 million to 26 million tonnes. The deep mines will be "turning the wick down" — and more jobs may have to go.

It is clear that RJB's future depends not only on the Government's energy review but also on the firm's ability to diversify its sales.

Mr Budge is trying to break into the European market by selling industrial coal to Germany and Spain. He is talking of securing contracts for up to 8 million tonnes, equivalent to saving five or six pits.

Mr O'Sullivan knows his pit's future is tied to that of RJB. "We're a small firm, like a pimple on the camel's back, and if we allow Budge to collapse and other firms like Welsh open-cast producer Celtic Energy to succumb, Britain will slowly decline to the point where we won't be self-sufficient in energy resources," he says.

What he and Mr Budge want from the energy review, due in spring, is for coal to be treated as a long term, sustainable, reliable resource.

"It's important for coal to get on to the base-load for producing energy, say at 60 million tonnes a year, so we can plan for the future. With that I can give generators a better product at a better price," says Mr O'Sullivan.

He adds: "That's the same for Mr Budge and Co. He needs a guaranteed tonnage for a few years because we are the cheapest source of energy. Nuclear can't compete and the real price of gas will go up in the near future. We can't simply rely, anyway, on foreign gas from countries in turmoil like Russia and Algeria. It's the easiest thing in the world for terrorists to blow up gas pipelines."

But Tower's ebullient boss knows, too, that Mr Budge has to slash costs. "I've been able to command a better price for our coal while they've had to adjust steeply downwards. Basically, this had to come. RJB's shareholders have had a very good three years and it's time they took on a bit of a cut on this."

As 1997 came to an end, there was speculation that Mr Budge would quit, whatever the outcome of the energy review. Some analysis are urging him to reduce the

firm to a handful of low-cost, highly productive pits or take the cash and run.

"Richard Budge lives and breathes this industry. If he wanted to pull out, why would he be arguing for coal to be given an equal opportunity and for a halt to the dash for gas?" his spokesman says.

"We have invested £1 billion in replacement capacity to ensure long-term sustainability, and we're not walking away."

Others, including RJB's miners, are unconvinced. Ed Wallis sees the future in Europe as a whole dominated by gas. "Expensive coal is no longer worth pursuing."

Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott will be hard at

it to ensure the energy review produces a long-term future for coal. We can expect measures unravelling the take-or-pay gas contracts, support for clean coal technology, reform of the electricity pricing pool and action by regulators to enforce lower gas prices.

But all this may simply prove to be a prolonged breathing space until Arthur Scargill's apocalyptic vision of a once-great industry's destruction becomes reality in the new millennium.

Mr O'Sullivan is already planning for that future. His

dream is to turn the Tower into a "living museum".

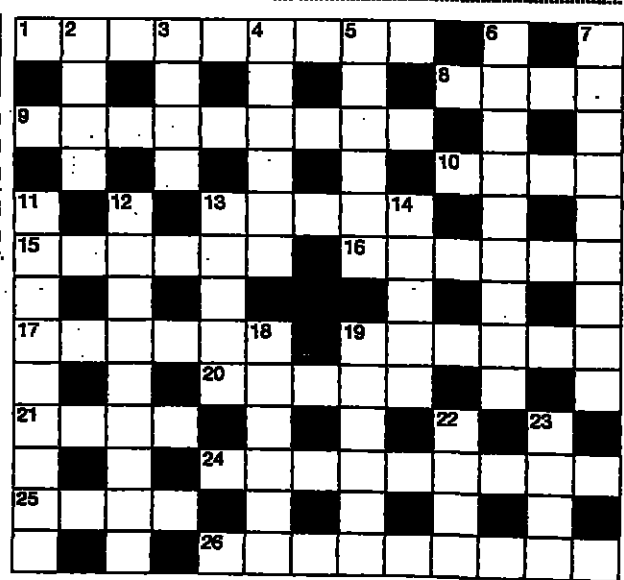
"We could turn this into a huge tourist operation, and pull in 100,000 people a year. This is the oldest pit in the world; the first ironworks was built down the road in 1750; the first red flag was raised in these hills; we were putting coal into royal yachts over a century ago. With this history we could build an industrial revolution heritage trail for our grandchildren and their children," he says.

A fitting memorial to a rich seam of British history that succumbed to the final, insurmountable economic fault?

## Quick Crossword No. 8635

TEMPERATURE ZONE  
S A F E  
END CASSANDRA  
S E A U  
T A P A R  
O A D H V O  
R E M E D Y  
S L A S H  
S C L I A  
E D U C A T I O N  
L A B  
S T E E P L E C H A D E R

Solution No. 8634



## Across

- 1 Highest academic rank at university (9)
- 2 Tidy (4)
- 3 Sea spray (5)
- 10 Competent (4)
- 13 Milk store (5)
- 15 Good reputation — to consider (6)
- 16 Death (6)
- 17 Festival (6)
- 19 Calamitous (6)
- 20 Decorate (5)
- 21 A way through — on foot (4)

- 24 Talked (9)
- 25 Always (4)
- 26 Impasse (5)

## Down

- 2 Mature (4)
- 3 Discover (4)
- 4 Indication of terror — or something very enjoyable (6)
- 5 One University ... (5)
- 6 ... and another (5)
- 7 Submission (5)
- 11 Yeoman Warder (5)

- 12 Brick — carrier (5)
- 13 Greek letter (5)
- 14 Long (5)
- 15 Dextrous (5)
- 19 Journey (5)
- 22 Tidy — neat (4)
- 23 Beat — the unbeatable (4)

Stuck? Call our solutions line on 0891 338 248. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by ATS

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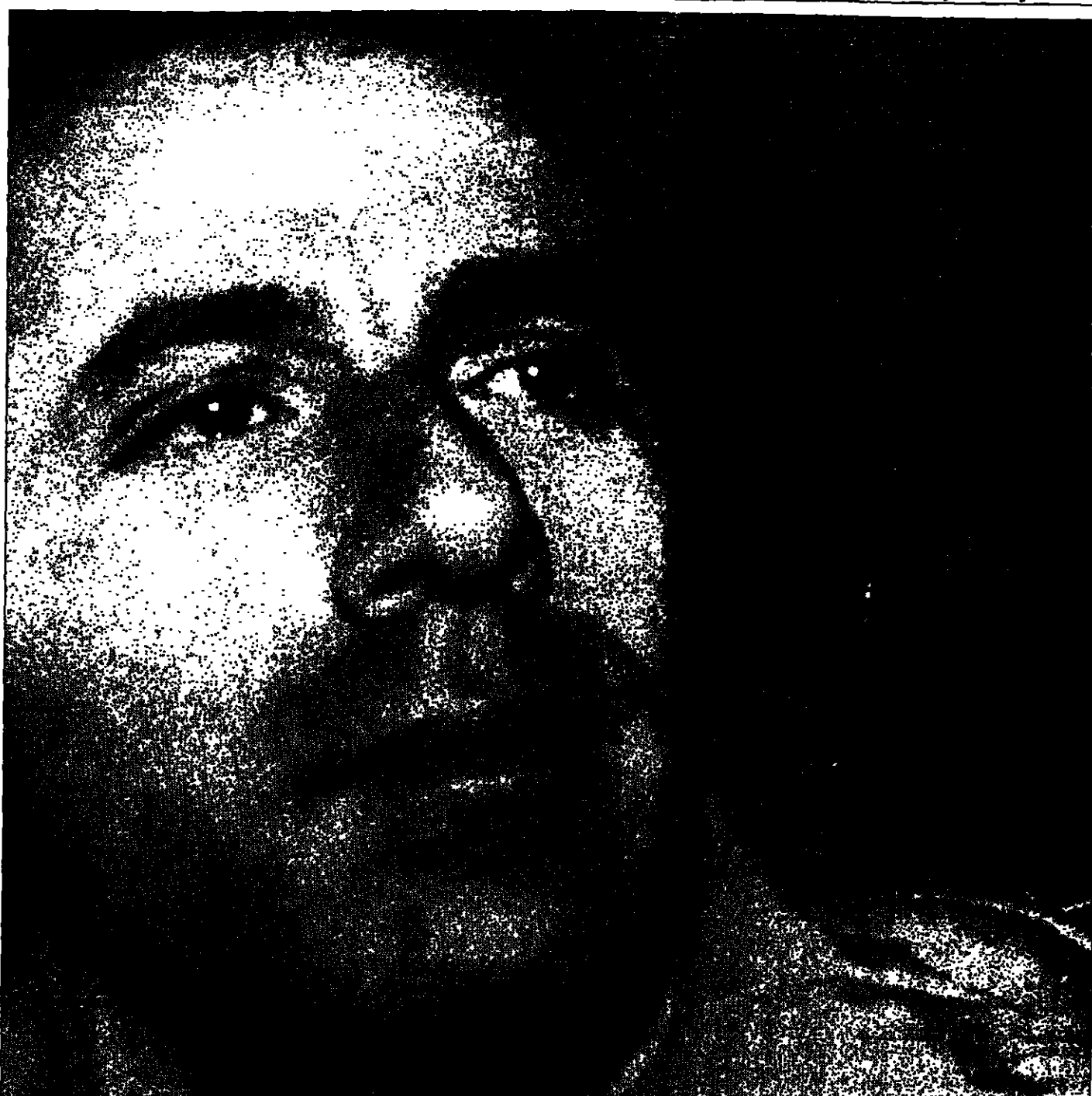
The Guardian

# the week

Saturday January 3 1998

## Secrets that stole my life

Mordechai Vanunu was kidnapped by Mossad when he told the world that Israel had the bomb. For over 10 years he has endured the torture of solitary confinement. **Sarah Boseley** reports on his fight for freedom and introduces the letters — printed below for the first time — which he hopes will make the world take notice of his plight



In this rare picture of Vanunu, above, he is escorted by Israeli soldiers shortly after his arrest in 1986 for divulging secrets. Below, one of his prison letters to his newly adoptive parents.

In a cell, nine feet long by six feet wide, lives a man alone. He wakes alone, eats alone, reads alone and sleeps alone. He has been alone in that cell for more than 10 years. Apart from his jailers, he sees only his brother once a fortnight. Their fingertips touch through iron bars. That is the sum of this man's human contact. His name is Mordechai Vanunu.

Vanunu is the nuclear technician who told the world in 1986 that his country, Israel, had a nuclear bomb. He came to London with photographs to prove it, was lured through the loneliness he felt even then into a honey trap sprung by a young woman working for Mossad. They flew to Italy, where he was kidnapped, drugged and shipped in a crate back to his native land to be charged with treason.

Israel calls him a traitor; anti-nuclear campaigners call him a hero. Nick and Mary Boloff call him son. On October 24, the retired Christian couple from a quiet corner of Minnesota legally adopted him in accordance with United States law.

They have six other grown-up children. Nick Boloff is a retired editor of law books, while Mary has always stayed at home, bringing up the family. They are in their sixties. Why would they want to take on this 42-year-old stranger who has spent a decade in solitary confinement but whose name is unknown to most of America?

"It just seemed so hard to me that that kind of punishment was being carried out in a civilised country like Israel," said Mary Boloff in calm, even tones. "It is hard to believe it is happening."

The journey that would take Vanunu to his nine-foot prison cell began in the Negev desert where he worked as a technician at the secret Dimona nuclear research establishment built for the Israelis by the French. Vanunu was not anti-Israeli as a young man — he served very successfully in the Israeli army — but became politicised when war with Lebanon broke out.

He began to see the dangers in escalation of the conflict with Israel's neighbours and became convinced that the Israeli public had a right to know its government possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Eventually, in 1986, he contacted the Sunday Times, who flew him to London where he showed them photographs of the inside of the Dimona plant. From the pictures

and Vanunu's observations, experts were able to deduce that Israel held the world's sixth largest stockpile of nuclear weapons.

Alone in London while the newspaper checked out the story, Vanunu became more and more anxious and lonely. Mossad was already on his case. He ran into a young American student called Cindy who quickly befriended him. When Robert Maxwell's Sunday Mirror ran a story intended to undermine the Sunday Times exposé, branding Vanunu as a liar, the terrified Israeli was persuaded to fly with Cindy to Rome.

She took him, lured him is perhaps the better description, to a hotel where other Mossad agents were waiting.

Vanunu next turned up in Israel, where the authorities denied he had been abducted, in spite of the

dramatic evidence he had scrawled in ink on his hand, pressed to the window of the police car. It gave the flight number from London to Rome and the word "hijack". It is now thought the Israeli authorities did not want to embarrass Margaret Thatcher by abducting him from London where he was under the protection of a national newspaper. The Israeli courts sentenced him to 18 years.

The Israeli government justifies its treatment of Vanunu on the basis that he was convicted after due process of law of revealing state secrets. It argues that his sentence is a proper punishment for someone who has betrayed his already beleaguered country and a deterrent for any who might think of imitating him. Moreover, the Foreign Office in London says it was told by the Israeli authorities

just before Christmas that they have offered an end to Vanunu's solitary confinement.

The Boloffs and fellow campaigners have been frustrated by the reluctance of governments in Europe and America to condemn Israel for its treatment of Vanunu. Israel escapes criticism, they feel, because of sensitivity to past sufferings and its claims to be vulnerable within the Middle East.

The adoption, which went ahead with Vanunu's agreement in writing, brought out of Ashkelon prison by one of his brothers, may

at least shake American complacency. Vanunu is now the adopted son of American citizens, not just some distant country's problem.

For three years, they have been writing letters to Mordechai and receiving his replies, defaced in an apparently arbitrary fashion by the censor's razor. A selection of the letters is published here. "Usually I just try to bolster him — tell him there are so many people working for him and there is a lot of hope," said Mary.

But Vanunu, alone in his cell, finds page 14

His letters are honest, bizarre, even at times offensive. **Mordechai Vanunu on the torture of life in prison**

## 'I am still the spy of the world'

Dear Mary & Nick,  
May 1996

To anyone to whom this paper may be presented: I am renouncing my Israeli citizenship. I, Mordechai Vanunu, declare here, from my free will and from my deep knowledge and understanding of the true Israeli democratic system or anti-democratic behaviour, that I don't want to be called an Israeli citizen any more. I want to be free from any Israeli sovereignty, power, control, or government, ending this chapter of my history, with this Zionist Jewish state of Israel.

Yours sincerely,

January 19, 1996

In this letter, I, Mordechai Vanunu, give you, Nick and Mary Boloff, the power and permission to act on my behalf over the receipt of US citizenship. This is my desire and wish. I want to come to the US for naturalisation purposes. I hope you and others will do all what you can to help my release and make it as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

January 19, 1996

I am very happy to know that you have received my letter, and you are acting on my behalf. The truth is that I want to be an American citizen. After all the treatment that I have received from Israel I have made a decision not to live in this state at all, for ever.

I want to find many people in the world who agree with what I did: telling of the secrets of Israeli nuclear

weapons, built in secret without the knowledge and approval of the people and the neighbouring Arabs. I know that I fulfilled my mission. I didn't want to be a spy on my own services. I chose not to make myself a secret agent, despite the eagerness and the protection that I could have received from another state, because I don't believe and trust any security service, and I don't like secrecy. I don't believe in spy games. The right way is what I did — go to the press, to the people. But they kidnapped me.

Now I am in solitary confinement. I am still the spy of the world, speaking about my experience under the hands of the Israeli psychological brainwashing. For nine years I've been under their treatment.

The attitude toward my case needs to be on the ground of respecting my action as an act that helped all the world, even the Israel state. My revelation helped the US to implement its policy for stopping nuclear proliferation.

I want you to write more about yourself because I don't know nothing about you.

Yours sincerely,

December 1996

I hope you are receiving my letters. I am writing you to let you know that I am still here in solitary confinement — after more than 10 years. Waiting and waiting for my release, to end this life in hell, under Israeli psychological brainwashing, bombardment, torture. When it comes to dealing with this Jewish Zionist state, no one is succeeding to bring any results. I am still working. I am still strong and have the strength to carry on no matter when

I'll be free, because I know that I am right. This hardship, my imprisonment will not help change anything. It is wasting time, to be here more and more years.

I want to wish you and all your family Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

January 8, 1997

I am very glad to hear from you and to know you had received my last letter. I have no problem to write and share with you my thoughts, feelings, suffering, experience. I even wrote a poem about my suffering here. But the main point is when is the president of all the world, not only of the US, Bill Clinton, going to speak very clearly and loudly for my release? No other state in all the world is doing anything for my release — they are in silence, afraid or speaking only in secret. So the first step should be that all my supporters should demand from their governments to speak on behalf of my release — very loud and clear.

You asked for more details in your last letter.

My complete name: Vanunu Mordechai, John Crossman.

Birth date: October 13, 1954.

Place of birth: Mantelsh, Morocco.

Parents names: Shlomo (Salomon) Vanunu, Major (Petro) Vanunu.

I don't think that information is what you or others lack for securing my release or US citizenship. The decision is at the very top level in the US and Israel. Israel doesn't want me to come to America, that's why they kidnapped me, and put me in solitary for 10 years. For this reason — because I know Israel was cheating on me — I decided to let all the

world know by writing on the palm of my hand the details of the kidnapping. I did only one mistake, because I didn't know English very well. I wrote "hijacked" instead of "kidnapped". And Israel used this mistake to convince others that maybe I was kidnapped in an aeroplane, a lie.

Until now they have tried to prevent me leaving Israel. What I don't understand is why I am in the middle of this spy game, and the answer must be that it is America that is con-

trolled, cheated, used, by a cartel of spies and they want to keep that control inside the US with Israel the main spearhead. This is the price the US is paying for its open free democratic state.

Other states like Israel, England and France are closed and controlled by their own security services. Like the BBC, it is a state propaganda system, not a channel for freedom of speech and information. Using this BBC World Service to



Our son the stranger... Mary and Nick Boloff have children of their own. Now they have an extra son but he is sitting in an Israeli prison. "It just seemed so hard to me to believe that this kind of punishment was being carried out in a civilised country like Israel," said Mrs Boloff.

broadcast to all the world is a new kind of sophisticated colonialism by psychological brainwashing.

I am looking to find some words that will explain Israeli behaviour. The words could be that Israel is an apartheid state but who can accept this tag if all America regards Israel as a democratic state? The best word is that Israel is a religious racist state — a Jewish Zionist racist state. Nuclear apartheid state. But I love to give them the name Nazism, SS Gestapo, because Israel is using those names against others. So now Israel itself is a neo-Nazi state and behaves like the SS and Gestapo, the difference is that Israel in this modern age uses modern methods, especially psychological brainwashing to make people harm themselves.

Like the Palestinians. It is not enough that Israel prevents them returning to their homeland. Israel has made them into terrorists, some Israelis are even calling the Palestinians Nazis. This is the greatness of Israeli propaganda. Those victims of Israeli atrocity become terrorists and Israel is honoured in the US as a democratic state.

They are doing the same thing to me. I am the victim of this solitary and unjust sentence. I am blamed as the enemy, I am not going to forget what they did to me. More than 10 years of brainwashing will not help them, because I became a Christian

before they kidnapped me. This Christianity is like a border they cannot go inside. They cannot take me. My Christianity is my guarantee to stay free for ever. So as long as you see the signature with JC — John Crossman — it means I am still free.

And I'll stay free, to prove that I was right to reveal the madness of Israeli nuclear secrets. I am not a spy, but a man who helped all the world to end the madness of the nuclear race.

Now I don't want to write more. I want to hear from you and more important to be free. Now I have a video. Could you send me some videos of your family, friends, good movies? This is the way to destroy this solitary confinement. I am sending you all my love and wishes.

Yours sincerely,

February 28, 1997

Now is more than a year since I began writing to you and nothing has come of your effort and others to bring my release. I would like to write directly to someone in Washington — Congressman or Senator or anyone who are interested in my release. I am suffering here, in the hands of barbaric brutal Israeli spies. They keep me in solitary because they are afraid that I can learn even more about their secrets from what people write to me. So they don't let people write to me and prevent me watching television.

So my life here is not easy at all. And yet I am writing and fighting like a freeman.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Mordechai Vanunu JC



## Troubles on the front page

### IAN MAYES OPEN DOOR

ON MONDAY this week the Guardian's front page, carrying the headline 'Terror threat to Ulster peace', was dominated by a photograph of the murdered loyalist leader, Billy Wright, surrounded by four khaki-clad, masked members of the Loyalist Volunteer Force, three of whom held handguns. The full-frontal, uncompromising presentation of the picture prompted protests from a number of readers — no more than half a dozen so far as I can ascertain — who felt the paper had wrongly allowed itself to be used for terrorist propaganda and, in the process, have been exacerbating an already inflammatory situation.

I'll return to the complaints in a moment. But, first of all, how did the picture come to be taken? The photographer who took it, and who has spent all his working life in Northern Ireland, was in Portadown on Sunday evening waiting for the body of Billy Wright to be returned to his home ahead of the funeral.

"I went down to the Brownstown area of Portadown and parked near the cul-de-sac where Wright had lived. It was already dark, and raining. There were small groups of people standing around with a group of four or five who looked like absolute things more or less sealing off the street. One of them came over and asked what I was doing. I said I was a freelance and hoped to get a picture of Wright's remains being returned to his home. I was told the body had arrived half an hour earlier.

"They went into another huddle and then one came across and said, 'Come with me'. I felt a bit uneasy because I was the only camera around. I was left for about 15 minutes sheltering from the rain in the porch of Wright's house at the end of the cul-de-sac.

"The guy who had led me to the house returned and said, 'OK, come in'. I was drawn towards the living room. I was stopped by this fellow who said, 'No, you're upstairs'. As soon as I got to the landing I was conscious of the open door of the front bedroom and the coffin and khaki-clad figures. No one followed me in. I shot about 30 frames. Then a voice from the landing said, 'Right lads, put the gear on the ground and salute.' They put their guns

down, turned towards the body and saluted. One then read a short statement and I left.

"I went back to the hotel in Portadown and got the pictures out. It was already late, nearly 8pm, by the time I sent the Guardian's picture (transmitted electronically down a telephone line).

The duty editor at the Guardian on Sunday evening, remote from the sweaty-palmed experience of the photographer, had, on the earlier promise of a picture, decided to wait as long as he could. By the time the picture was actually available to him there was very little time for deliberation. There was a discussion around the desk, lasting for five to 10 minutes.

It was clearly a very powerful picture. The developments in Northern Ireland were thought to constitute the most important story of the moment. The slaughter of civilians in Hong Kong was the possible options for the front, was briefly reconsidered but it was decided to stand by an earlier decision to carry it on Page 2. Beyond that, there was little contending for the lead on Page 1.

The body of the dead loyalist, the gunmen around the body were considered to provide a chilling image totally appropriate to shocking events which challenged the peace process. This reading of it, the duty editor felt, was endorsed, and encouraged in others, by the words of the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, which it was decided to carry alongside the picture. They included:

"Everyone has been well served by the fact that the Loyalist Volunteer Force regarded it as propaganda. It was unlikely to work in the way intended. And while the picture was recognised as a cliché, it was thought that the circumstances surrounding it placed it in a special category.

"To return to the complaints. One person to whom I spoke thought that it was a violent image of a kind the paper should not be printing in any case. Beyond that — and this was a view shared by all those who rang the Guardian — she felt that the paper had colluded with terrorists seeking publicity and in so doing had demeaned itself and its readers.

I believe the paper was justified both in using it, and in displaying it in the way that it did. To have had the picture pulled, to have agreed, headed the consequences that might flow from the event it addressed, and not to have used it, would perhaps have been chivalry.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 9595 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 9887. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk



### THEME OF THE WEEK TECHNOLOGY

Check new year tidings for politicians, terrorists, techies, spouses and skivers of all sorts. It was revealed this week that your mobile phone is something of a double agent. Handy as it is for keeping you in touch while disguising your location, cellular phones also, it turns out, act effectively as a homing device, signalling your whereabouts precisely.

Not only do they track you continually, in Switzerland, a Sunday newspaper discovered that the phone company, Swisscom, routinely supplied details of subscribers' movements on a judge's request, and can even supply detailed movement profiles of specific individuals. It was alleged that Swiss police have

been keeping tabs on their crimes through their portables, and when British mobile phone companies were asked, they too admitted that on production of a court order they will allow law enforcement agencies access to their computer records. Not something mentioned prominently in those small-print mobile phone agreements. Nor is the fate of Dzhokar Dudayev, the Chechen leader, assassinated by the Russians. They waited until he was on his mobile to King Hassan II of Morocco who had been asked to help mediate an end to the Chechen war. Then they sent a laser-guided missile to home in on his cell phone. Dial M (orcow) for murder.

What seems to be a less spooky consumer application of technology announced this week also has bothersome undertones. A Colorado company, Earthwatch, has launched a satellite which will be able to supply detailed photos of your home from space. Apparently, it can distinguish a paddling pool from its 296 mile-high orbit

above Earth — a remarkable feat since by the start of summer most parents have difficulty locating the darned things even after a fingertip search of the garden shed.

The development is the result of the US Military declassifying spy satellite expertise, and even at the best part of £200 a shot, a satellite picture of your property seems like a nice present.

But what if this technology were to be applied to people? Wives could buy husbands a framed, souvenir map of their trip to that important sales conference, which was supposed to be in Wolverhampton but was mysteriously relocated to the south of France. And to go with the map, a satellite picture of hubby and friend pool-side, caucussing and drinking vintage champagne.

Technology has finally reached the land of Sir Humphrey. It was also reported, Science Minister John Rennie has led an initiative to render obsolete those 20th, lead-lined nuclear red boxes. It's not exactly a quantum leap to

scale all the bumph in those down to one laptop, which can then modem work backwards and forwards to Whitehall from wherever the minister happens to be. But converting Ministers to IT is proceeding painfully slowly, with Tony Blair apparently one of the most stubborn Luddites. Lots of fun in store when the first minitactical laptop gets pinched from the back of a car.

Even when old technology was ditched, as Morse Code finally was this week, it went down nobly. On New Year's Eve, the final day of Morse Code's existence as an emergency communication system, a Bahamas-registered ship, NY Oak, had to use it when it got into trouble in mid-Atlantic.

So surprised were the Falmouth Coastguard when passed the old-fashioned SOS by Sharnheaven Radio near Aberdeen, where the Morse operator's message was picked up, that they thought it was a timely joke for posterity. "We haven't had a Morse distress message for years," a spokesman said. Jonathan Murgello

### HAVE YOU BEEN PAYING ATTENTION?

- 1 Who is Peter Mandelson going to consult about the Millennium Dome? a) Mystic Woz b) Mickey Mouse c) Peter Tatchell d) Peter Rabbit
- 2 What is the name of the Cabinet minister whose son was arrested for allegedly dealing in drugs?
- 3 1997 was the third warmest year since records began. Which years were hotter?
- 4 Who has the Government asked for advice, prompting (tabloid) outrage?
- 5 Which bird has been identified by ornithologists as the most common in Europe?
- 6 How will we have to address J Paul Getty II soon?
- 7 Which Oscar-winning former actress may stand for Mayor of London?
- 8 Author Margie Jenkins has just published her

first book of children's stories. Now old is she?

9 The Stairs are holidaying at a spot in the Seychelles reputed to be a setting for which film? a) Carrie b) Brammabell c) Emma d) Lolita

10 What does a Russian academic believe to be located off the coast of Cornwall?

11 What is NASA's new probe Lunar Prospector looking for on the Moon? a) shine b) man-in-the-b) cheese d) water

# M

- 12 What does this logo denote? a) Mickey Mouse b) Peter Mandelson c) Millennium d) McDonalds
- 13 The Army has a new recruited catchphrase borrowed from which pop star?
- 14 Some Irish troops are using the Dublin government for neglecting to supply them with what?
- 15 Who has been accused of elaborating his war record?

Gabrielle Morris  
Answers below Theme of the Week

### AWARDS OF THE WEEK



#### Whip of The Week:

"She will always be very on-message politically, and is very ambitious. She is just a bit off-message in other ways." Senior Labour source on the "Blair Babe" who was alleged to have been photographed on the terrace of the House of Commons without any knickers.

#### Bobby of The Week:

Former Head of Middlesbrough CID, Detective Superintendent Ray Mallon, who was voted Man of the Year by listeners to BBC Radio Cleveland. The champion of "zero-tolerance" is currently suspected while corruption allegations are investigated.

#### Advocate of The Week:

OJ Simpson, who spent millions on his defence against the charge of killing his ex-wife and her boyfriend, has reportedly enrolled on a course to become a lawyer.

#### The Week's award for damning with faint praise:

Sir Anthony Rumbold, Britain's Ambassador to Austria in 1967.

Government papers released on Monday revealed that he reported to Whitehall that Austria had had "a dull year", that the people were "superficial", and that Austrian Chancellor Dr Klaus had qualities no more than would be "expected of the chairman of a county council".

#### Unburied hatchet of The Week:

Yoko Ono, widow of John Lennon, commenting on the relationship between her late husband and Paul McCartney: "John was the visionary, and that is why the Beatles happened. [Paul] is put in the position of being a Sallier to a Mozart."

#### Father of The Week:

David Sullivan, proprietor of the Sports Illustrated newspapers, has become a father. Of his new-born, also called David, the Great Man said: "I won't push him into newspapers, but I would be happy for him to read The Sport after he is eight."

#### Sporting gesture of The Week:

The men of a Teesside pub football team who mobbed their female goalkeeper Vicky Higginbotham after she pulled off a brilliant save in a Boxing Day match. They left her with five broken ribs and a punctured lung. Gabrielle Morris

## Secrets that stole my life

Page 13 that hard to believe. His letters are the only indication the world has, apart from the testimony of his brother, Asher, who visits him, of his state of mind. And the evidence they provide is worrying.

Vanunu's letters are obsessive, repetitive and angry, but they make sense in the context of what has happened to him. There is an urgency and a drive about them. He has not given up — indeed, not. Israel is his enemy and, he insists, the world's enemy.

There is paranoia. He sees Zionist conspiracy "the spy of the world", who has revealed Israel's great nuclear secret and will now expose its evil ways. There is frustration, that the campaigns, particularly in Britain, have not led to his release.

Last February he told the Eolofoffs: "Now is more than a year since I began writing to you and nothing has come of your effort and others to bring my release. I would like to write directly to someone in Washington — Congress or Senator or anyone who are interested in my release."

In June, he asked them what he should write and to whom, "because you are on the outside you know and understand what... they need to hear from me." He offers mega-theories he has dreamed up in his isolation about "the spy games of this century", about the space race, the nuclear race, the cold war and the cloning of animals.

He says very little about the physical conditions in which he is held but there are frequent references to being held in solitary confinement, to "brainwashing" and torture.

Such prolonged isolation is indeed torture, say experts. At a pro-Vanunu conference last October which broke new ground not least by being held in Tel Aviv, an Israeli psychiatrist described his

treatment as "an appalling form of continued torture".

"I would like to talk to you Mordechai Vanunu," Dr Ruhama Marton said. "I can only imagine how immense is your need to talk to people, to hear them, to make them listen to what you are saying. To touch, to see, to smell. All those things of which you are deprived, year after year after year. All those things whose lack is driving you mad. Would drive mad anyone who is kept in isolation..."

"The most common feeling people in solitary confinement have is that of extreme and profound anxiety. Gradually fear and despair take over and the person's mental and physical strength are shattered. The feelings of total abandonment and deep anxiety coupled with the factors of thought disorder and hallucinations rapidly put a person into a constant state of doubt and uncertainty in which they may lose their self-confidence, self-esteem and finally their identity."

Asher Vanunu, a teacher who lives in Jerusalem, takes it in turns with other brothers to make the 90-minute trip to Ashkelon prison for the fortnightly permitted visit. He believes the Israeli authorities are keeping Vanunu in solitary for a reason. "They want to drive him mad," he says. "They want to harm him. They want revenge. I think the treatment he gets is inhuman. No one in the democratic countries would get this kind of treatment. Nobody would put him in solitary confinement for 11 years where no one can talk to him or see him. They want him to be seen as the enemy of the people."

When he visits, he speaks to Vanunu through bars. "We are not allowed to touch. The only thing we can do is put our fingers through the bars. It is the only human touch he gets. He misses human company and talking to people."

Asher says the cell contains a bed with a few shelves for books. In one corner is a shower and a toilet. There is no direct sunlight. "He goes for exercise to an outside yard. The area is covered all around with a canvas sheet so that nobody can see him." He may run



for a couple of hours, but sometimes he will just sit or walk up and down.

His family say they are astounded by his toughness. "We are amazed at his character and his strength of mind. They want to show him as a traitor who is not worth anything, but he says he is struggling and fighting and will not give up," says Asher. Sometimes, he claims, Mordechai is offered a concession, like telephone calls, if he will sign undertakings not to talk about such matters as his crime or his abduction. "He won't sign anything. He says they should give me what they give all prisoners without conditions."

The world does not know what Vanunu, 41 years on, looks like. The last image we have was an intent face staring out of a police car, his hand pressed against the window for photographers. On it in biro he had written of his "kidnap" he meant kidnapping — in Rome. He has made court appearances since then, attempting to contest his solitary confinement, but he is brought in wearing a mask. "This is plain inhuman treatment," says his brother. "It is humiliating for the man."

Vanunu has reacted against his captors in every conceivable way. He has renounced Israel as his country and he has become a Christian. A cross now hangs on the wall of his cell. He has also taken to signing himself JC, which might be taken as an identification with Jesus Christ but which he says stands for John Crossman.

Some of this must be difficult for his family who have suffered much since Vanunu was jailed. His parents are religious Jews who arrived in Israel from Morocco in 1963. It was said that his father had discovered Mordechai. Asher says that was never true.

"In the media, they wanted to portray him as if even his family totally rejected him, which is a total lie. It was a right-wing newspaper that put words in my father's mouth."

"My father says: 'He is my son'. We all care for him and we want him out as soon as possible."

Israel's justification for continuing to hold him in solitary confinement is that Vanunu holds state secrets. Professor Joseph Rotblat, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize,

who chaired the Tel Aviv conference, is among those who say that is nonsense. "Having followed developments in nuclear weapons throughout the years, I am firmly of the opinion that there is nothing of significance that he could tell at the present time that is not already known and published."

Vanunu was a relatively low-level technician at the secret Dimona nuclear weapons plant. Supporters say he told all he had to tell in 1986.

The Free Vanunu campaign in Britain takes heart from a survey of opinion that he has been punished enough. "We have broken down the taboo about Mordechai," said Ernest Rodker in London. "It is now something that is discussed in Israel. We keep going and raising the issue."

"We think it has had an impact on the security services who control what happens to him. They are trying to relieve the conditions to some extent, but they want him to comply with them. They have been letting him out for two to three hours a day in a yard outside the cell."

The Eolofoffs are demanding the right to visit their adopted son — only family are allowed to see him — and they have been petitioning President Clinton and the American ambassador in Tel Aviv, Martin Indyk, for help. Their eventual aim is to get Vanunu full American citizenship as a first step towards his freedom.

But for all the international conference, the vigils, the speeches by public figures from Professor Rotblat to Daniel Ellsberg (whose leaking of the Pentagon papers helped stop the Vietnam War), to Harold Pinter and Susanah York, Vanunu is still in solitary confinement and has eight years of his 18-year sentence to serve.

"There is no way he can see we are having any real impact," says Rodker. "He feels he is the only one standing strong against what is happening and we are doing nothing to help him."

Which is why, for Mordechai Vanunu, the letters from his adoptive parents in America are so important. It is also clearly why he is so urgently enthusiastic in his replies to the Eolofoffs about the chances of America finally opening the door of its lonely prison cell.

مورديchai فانوني



After a gap of 15 years, Michael Parkinson is reviving his celebrity chat show. But can Barnsley's famous son compete with the slickness and irony of the likes of Clive Anderson and Mrs Merton?

# Stars in his ayes

INTERVIEW BY SABINE DURRANT



sat opposite Michael Parkinson at a charity dinner last winter and he looked bored out of his mind. The West End premiere that preceded it probably wasn't his cup of tea ("bloody hell" he muttered at one point). He winked once but for the most part lounged back in his black tie, maybe slightly squiffy, giving an impression of girth, of spent success, at any rate expending the comfortable aloofness of the most famous person at the table. Occasionally he would wander off and Mary Parkinson, his wife, would peep, "Where's the old silver fox gone now?"

It was a very different Michael Parkinson I met the other day in a Green Room at Television Centre to promote the return of Parkinson, hitting your screens again after 15 years. He was on the phone when I came in, but shot out a free hand: "Mike Parkinson" and once off it, he was all over the room, lithe and fit and up-and-at-'em. Bit of joshing with "darling", the publicity woman. A few loud howls of his nose, cursing of his eyesight ("I can't see anything without my glasses. Terrible") and some sorting out of the BBC as if he'd never been away.

"If there's anything you need..." the publicist says, halfway out the door. Parky was straight back at her: "I tell you what we might need, er, er, some fresh tea."

"Oh is it stewed again?" she replies.

"A bit stewed so... eventually?" He was jetlagged too, straight off the plane from visiting his son and grandchildren in Australia. Days he travel business these days? He guffawed at the thought: "Nooo, I go first class," he says, shaking his silver head, crinkling up those saggy well-lined eyes, the flat Yorkshire "a" in "class" particularly pronounced. "Oh no... When I started making money... I don't sit at the back of the bus any more. Oh no."

A lot has changed since Parkinson's been away. As he puts it: "Different person, different time, different hair, different neck sizes." In the old shows from 1971 to 1982, in his slacks and sideburns, he dined with Raquel Welch and sparred with Muhammad Ali, hands clenched between his knees, head bent forward as if to catch every fascinating word. Parky was the viewer's representative on Mars: "Don't you have rather long hair for a singer, Mr. Jagger?" he said then. "Oh Christ," he says now remembering the occasion.

Nowadays, in a land peopled by Mrs Merton and Clive Anderson, ruled by publicity schedules and militant PRs, the chat show is an altogether different creature: knowing, ironic, a spectacle in itself. "I think it's come full circle," says Parkinson. "I think I'm a wiser man now, a better interviewer than I was. A more mature man — it would be odd if I wasn't."

He breaks off for a spluttering ironic laugh, before slamming back into the subject.

"I think we've explored every avenue apart from doing a talk show in a submarine or a hot air balloon. I think people would actually like to hear a conversation between two people without some kind of gimmick being

produced, without any kind of in-ter-face nonsense."

So the new Parkinson show will be exactly like the old. Same format, same set, same theme tune: "Yup, totally: diddy dum-di-dum," he hums. Even, you could say, the same guests. Parkinson looks down his glasses at the publicity material. "I've interviewed Elton before, Liam Neeson no, Ewan McGregor no, Phil Collins yes, Helen (Mirren) yes, Sir David Attenborough yes, Joanna Lumley yes, Anthony Hopkins yes, Barry Manilow yes, Paul Merton no."

But there is a new ingredient in the mix: Parkinson's own status as a famous person in his own right. He doesn't return as the boy from Barnsley, the son of a coal miner, or as a journalist in the ascendant. He returns as Parkinson, the chat-show host par excellence.

Of course, he wouldn't put it quite like that himself. Indeed, as a correction in last weekend's Sunday Telegraph noted: "We are happy to make clear that, despite the impression which might have been inadvertently given by a profile in the Sunday Telegraph Magazine of Dec 14, Mr Parkinson has never claimed that he is 'the best bloody interviewer in the world.'"

Even so, the recent re-runs of his old interviews got ecstatic reviews, far better than he ever earned at the time. For better or worse, he comes back as a legend, an emblem of a golden age.

"I think that works in your favour," he says. "I remember I used to call everybody Mr or Mrs or Miss. Halfway through the interview with Orson Welles he said, 'Call me Orson,' and I said, 'I prefer Mr Welles,' and he said, 'Why?' and I said something appallingly pompous like, 'Out of deference to your stature,' and he said, 'Bullshit.' So I called him Orson from that point on."

"In those days I suppose I was overawed by them. But really in a talk show, the [guests become] more conversational and more relaxed if they think they already know you. I watched Robin Williams and Billy Crystal on the Oprah Winfrey Show yesterday and they were fantastic, wonderful, because they treated her as someone of equal stature. She got a performance from them they wouldn't give to anyone else."

He leans back on the uncomfortable BBC sofa as if it was a first-class airline seat, twirling his glasses in his hand, one calf hitched up across the other knee. It's not hard interviewing the interviewer's interviewer. He has opinions about everything — football ("two superheroes in years"), successful marriages ("Good"), the tabloids' obsession with soap stars ("20 pages of bollocks"). He conducts a one-man conversation, by turns amusing himself greatly almost crying with laughter, then enravaging himself.

At one point, our interview hits the buffers when he forgets the name of the National Union of Journalists leader who in 1978 kiboshed plans for Parkinson to go five nights a week (by persuading Parliament it represented "a trivialisation of the airwaves"). "Guy who died recently. Um..." He clicks his fingers in irritation. "Ulsterman... um... What was his name? The guy who used to do a media show for Radio 4... What the hell was his... this is jelling you see. The guy who died recently. The broadcaster. The journalist. The Ulsterman... What the hell was his name?"

He has started banging the table with his pen. "Oh shit, I can't go on without... no, no, no."

"Vincent Hanna."

His relief — mine too, actually — is palpable.

He's at his most cheerful when

Parky talk... 'People would actually like to hear a conversation between two people without some kind of gimmick being produced, without any in-ter-face nonsense'

**'That earlier generation of Hollywood stars had another dimension; they were less posey'**

remembering some of the old shows. Asking Rex Harrison in the Green Room if there was anything he didn't want to talk about. "My wives," he said. "But Mr Harrison, you've been married eight times, it'll leave a bloody big gap in the conversation." Asking the same of Princess Anne — and being told "Mr Parkinson, you may ask me anything you want, I don't necessarily have to answer."

Of the time when Billy Connolly said "about as welcome as a fart in a spacesuit" and Angie Dickinson got an attack of the giggles. Or when he asked John Coniah, in front of Pete and Dud, if he had sex before a fight: "Well you can imagine what Peter Cook did with me on that one — 'Do you have sex before a fight?' Of watching Fred Astaire rehearse an act '10,000 times' before coming on; of listening to Jimmy Stewart."

"I was lucky because that generation of Hollywood stars did tend to be storytellers. I think the system that they worked in produced anecdotes, produced characters. Like [John] Ford. And the other thing about those people, they weren't just film stars, they were rounded men. Jimmy Stewart was a very brave man, he had a brave war. You

know there was another dimension to them; they were less introspective, less narrow-minded about their job, less posey. And they weren't the puppets of PR people. When I interviewed James Cagney it was the first time he'd ever been interviewed. Astaire too."

And was it true he went out on the town with them after the show? "Before the show with Lee Marvin. We went to a drinking bar called the Tatty Bogle in Dean Street — no, not Dean Street, in Soho somewhere — and there was behind the bar a red-headed woman called Joan who had seen them all come and go. Used to lend me money."

She was a mad keen movie buff. Anyway I took Lee Marvin down there and he got so pissed, so enamoured of this woman behind the bar that he said to her, 'What can I do for you?' And she said, 'Could you just show me how you did that scene in Cat Ballou when you did the fast draw and your trousers fell down?' 'You got it lady,' he said, and he stood there in the room, drunk in the middle of Soho. Jesus, he pulled his pants down and he had these big red drawers on... oh Christ, it was funny. I can just see him now standing there and he's let his hair down and she's going

clap clap clap — it was a wonderful bizarre scene — ah he was a wonderful guy, marvellous man."

Parkinson can hardly go on, he's so tied up with laughing. And then he remembers something else. "I took Jack Lemmon down there, too. We had a wonderful time and when I took him home his wife was waiting on the doorstep of the hotel — first time I'd ever seen a wife waiting for her husband on the doorstep of a hotel. He wrote this marvellous letter afterwards saying, 'Dear Mike, this is the first letter my doctor has allowed me to write since I saw you...'" And he crosses up again.

Would it be better if Parkinson, 62, left well alone, and stayed in his memories? Brad Pitt, as he admits, wouldn't be as much fun on the town as Lemmon or Marvin (though Tom Hanks might). Wouldn't it be better, now he's stopped "chasing his tail", and has got time to potter round his Thames-side home at Gray in Berkshire, to enjoy his grandchildren and play golf with Mary?

But then you remember that this is a man who has been to TV-AM and back, who's earned a lot of money in the past 15 years, presenting *Going For A Song* and The

Antiques Quiz, as well as radio work and writing sports columns for the Daily Telegraph. And maybe he just wants one last go at what he did best.

"I did an interview when it was first announced that I might be doing this," he says. "And James Naughtie looked at me and said, 'Have you got the energy to do all that again?' And I knew what he meant and I had to answer that question: do I have the energy? Not to do the show, but to do the business — promoting it, the critical flak and all that sort of thing. And I think I have. It's not going to hurt my career, I mean that's established or over or whatever it might be. It's not going to make a difference to me now."

But he's still jittery enough for one subject to be off-limits. What about his football team Barnsley which has made it to the Premier League? "Oh well, I mean, I don't wish to talk about this actually," he says, suddenly bashful. Why not? "Because the problem is that Barnsley might be relegated... and I don't want to go down the same chute."

The new series of Parkinson begins on BBC1 on Friday with guests Paul Merton, Barry Manilow and Anthony Hopkins.

## SIMON HOGGART'S WEEK



How the papers tried (and failed) to grass up Jack Straw

SUPPOSE I assumed that "everybody" knew it was Jack Straw's son who had been caught selling pot in a pub. That's why I was surprised by how many friends and relations rang to ask (some had a pretty good idea, but wanted it confirmed). One reason may be that most people's chief source of gossip, their workplace, is closed over Christmas. But the newspapers should be worried. They have been doing everything short of putting Straw's name in banner headlines on page one, and still their readers didn't take the hint. It was like the days just before the Profumo scandal became public, when a huge picture of the man himself doing something meaningless would be run next to a story about Christine Keeler.

Over the past few weeks the papers have printed pictures of the Home Secretary, run otherwise pointless news stories about him and his department, made sure his name appeared more often on more pages than in any week since the general election, and one paper even included this line in a piece

about the affair: "Mr Straw declined to be interviewed for this article."

It's a salutary lesson for us journalists to learn again: most people flip casually through the papers; and don't pay half as much attention to what we write as we would like to believe.

ON THE other hand, it's not all failure. I was surprised to see that no fewer than four of the top 10 international stories on 1997 — measured in a world-wide poll by the Associated Press — were either entirely British or had a strong British content. They were Princess Diana's death (first place), the handover of Hong Kong (second), our election result (fifth), and the cloning of Dolly the sheep (10th). The Americans came in at number 12 with the Pathfinder landing on Mars, and the only top 30 event to take place on American soil was the murder of Gianni Versace, at number 19.

I suspect that in the new global news marketplace, stories can be sold across borders as easily as oil,

cameras or Tamagotchis. The British, with our strong, highly competitive media, are as good at creating slick, appealing news for international consumption as western Germans are at cars, and West coast Americans at software. Princess Di's death was the main event they worked in produced anecdotes, produced characters. Like [John] Ford. And the other thing about those people, they weren't just film stars, they were rounded men. Jimmy Stewart was a very brave man, he had a brave war. You

THE assassination of one murderous psychopath, Billy Wright, by two others of a different religion at least indicates that the Republicans might just be getting the message. Britain would love to get out of Ulster forthwith and forever. It is Protestants like Wright who don't want a united Ireland. If Republicans were to grasp that simple truth there might even be a starting point for the peace talks.

OUR local lollipop lady, Joyce Eustace, got an MBE in the New Year's honours, which we're all very pleased about. In the past, she would have received the British Empire Medal, which was the quintessence of a class-based society. People whose public service was in ministries, embassies or officers' messes got the real goods:

**If Blair really wanted to reform the Lords he could add a few 'ordinary' people to bring real knowledge**

people who gave just as much time, effort and devotion to cooking school dinners, or running buses, or helping children to school got the plebe' version. The implication was that there could be no point in admitting them to the Order of the British Empire; they'd only keep coal in it.

If Tony Blair really wanted to reform the Lords, instead of filling

it up with more party placemen and lobby fodder, he could add a few "ordinary" people — those whose lives are too full in other ways to bother about a career in politics, but who could bring real knowledge and experience to our legislature. Of course he won't; he could never be sure which way they'd vote.

I WATCHED Forrest Gump on TV the other night, for the first time. It was better than I expected: a funny and stringent canter through post-war American history seen through the eyes of a wise simpleton; much the same plot was used for Peter Sellers's *Being There* and Ronald Reagan's *Being There* and a whole political career. But there were some awfully annoying bits. Whenever Hollywood film-makers haven't got an ending, they kill off the young woman. Just when the film is running out of steam, along comes that old mystery virus...

And why does Gump keep quoting his mother's knackered old saw, "Life is like a box of chocolates. Yew never know

what you're gonna git", when anyone with the brain power of Bisto gravy granules knows that boxes of chocolates all contain a piece of paper describing precisely what you are going to get, in considerable detail, and are thus as different from life as any single entity possibly could be.

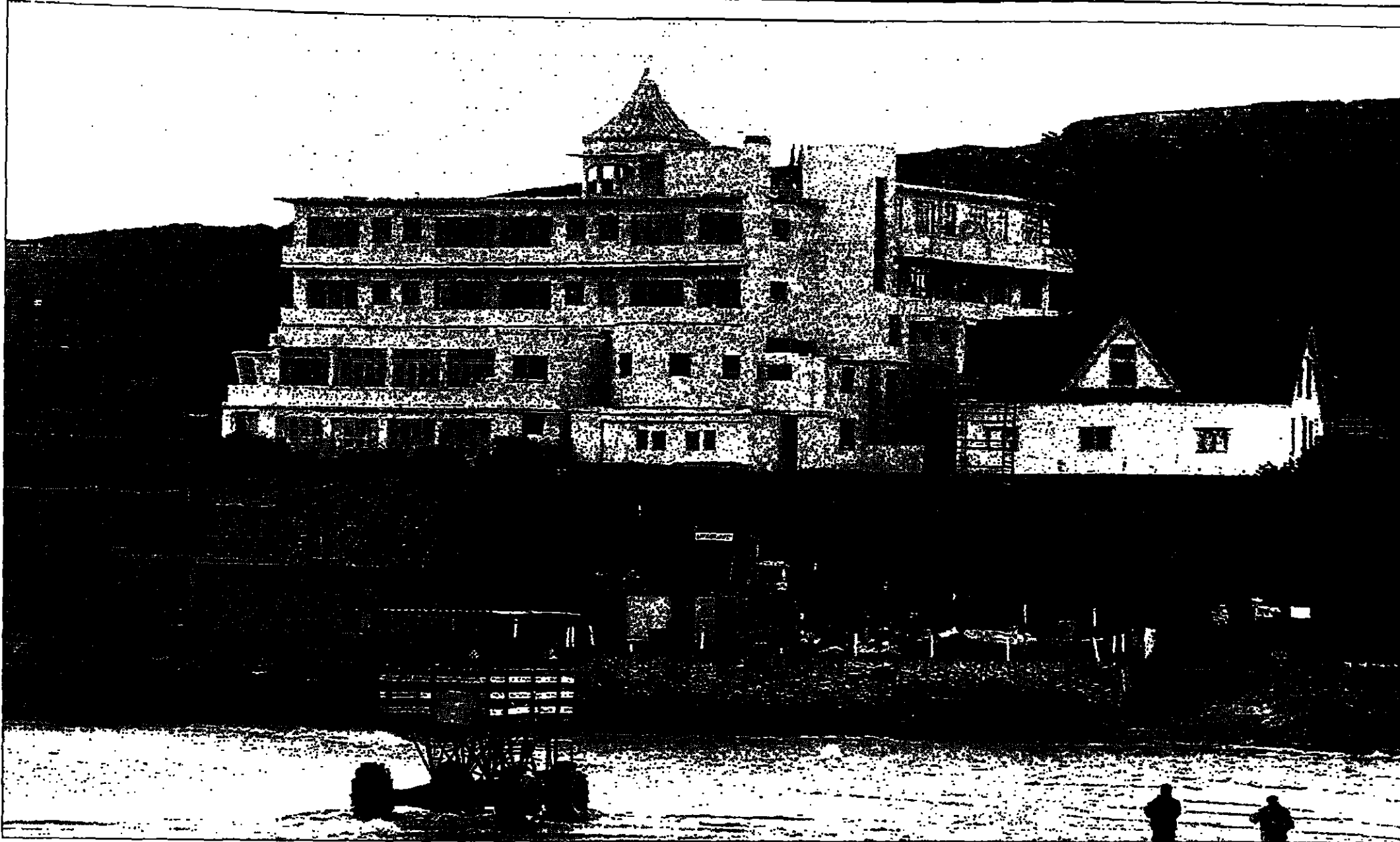
PEOPLE keep assuring me, in an annoying "gosh, you must be out of touch if you didn't realise that" fashion, that Lon Reed's song, *Perfect Day*, is not about a chap having a nice time with his girlfriend, but about drugs, and heroin in particular. Is this true? I'd be sorry. As a celebration of the intense happiness small, shared pleasures can bring, it's a very touching song. On the other hand, drugs would explain some of the oddities, such as the curious way it turns into a hellfire gospel song ("You're gonna reap just what you sow").

I hope the BBC is on top of this. It would be a shame if a hymn to heroin had raised all that money for Children in Need.









No room at the millennium inn... back in 1989 people started writing to book a room at the Burgh Island Hotel for the year 2000. Now the Savoy, Concorde and QEII are oversubscribed  
PHOTOGRAPH: MARCHILL

# When M is for panic

You thought the pressure was on to have fun on New Year's Eve? But what will you be doing as the world celebrates the arrival of the year 2000? **Luke Harding** reports on the growing anxieties about the millennium

The place: a small island off the south Devon coast. The date: New Year's Eve, 1999. As the sun sets on a thousand years of human history, a giant tractor chugs its way across the shallow stretch of sea which separates Burgh Island from the mainland. It is low tide. On board, a handful of millennium revellers snugly clink their champagne glasses together and admire the evening seagulls.

Where better, you might think, to celebrate the millennium? Relax in the splendour of the Burgh Island Hotel, with its glorious Art Deco furnishings and wonderful

bedroom. Slope down to the Pilehead, the 29-acre island's ancient pub, and enjoy a millennial pint. Go for a stroll, along some of the coves and gullies used by smugglers. Arouse your partner (it is the millennium, after all) in the bedroom reputedly used by Edward VIII to seduce his mistress Wallis Simpson.

There is only one problem with this halcyon scenario. You are too late. Already to the despair of owner Tony Porter, 85 people have written asking if they can see in the new century at his hotel, near Bigbury-on-Sea. There are, alas, only 14 rooms. Porter, who bought Burgh Island in the early eighties,

received his first millennial inquiry in 1989. He filed the letter away numbered it "one" and tried to forget about it. More arrived. Recently they have grown plaintive, almost desperate, in tone.

As the debris from New Year's Eve 1997 is dumped into black plastic bins, and the tablets of resolve are stuffed back into the drawer for another year, a social scenario far more ghastly presents itself: what to do for the millennium. With only 727 days left, millennial angst has taken a grip of the chattering classes. Not just where to spend it — now the Savoy, Concorde and QEII are horribly oversubscribed, darling — but who

## Five ways to avoid the millennium

1. No to Greenland. A small, cold, sparsely populated island by polar bears.
2. Climb on top of a truck in the central Kalahari desert. Endangering vehicles where the millennium will be of no interest to the traffic police.
3. Leave your truck by the side of the road before midnight on New Year's Eve 1999, leaving those on route. On arrival in Britain, ask your watch forward to local time, making the event complete. The ultimate millennium snub.
4. Travel to an island country where the Islamic calendar (12 of 44 days shorter) is in use. Follow them the Western calendar. The Islamic New Year is in 1420. Here there will be no millennium.
5. Stay at home. Don't stretch on your television set. Go to bed early.

## Five places to avoid at all costs

1. The Bay of Islands in the South Pacific. The island quietly moved the International Date Line to its eastern extremity, Caroline Island, in 1993, turning its Pacific neighbours to be the first to enter the millennium. Heavy tourist traffic expected.
2. Greenwich, south of the Thames and across of grand old Greenwich. The site of the Prime Meridian, Greenwich was the first to enter the millennium. Heavy tourist traffic expected.
3. Times Square, New York. Celebrations with New Year's Eve in America since 1904. "Times Square 2000" celebrations are planned, with giant video screens, balloons.
4. Edinburgh. Some of a giant Hogmanay party which was first held in 1792. Last week 100,000 attended the Hogmanay party. Edinburgh is a great place to celebrate.
5. The Costa del Sol in Spain. In the spirit of the International Date Line.

to spend it with? The millennium hyperbole, currently at a low, Dome-ish rumble, is set to grow deafening over the coming months.

And for Tony Porter this all presents an awful dilemma. Should he whack his prices up, confident that people will pay virtually anything to secure the right room in the right location? Or should he allow old friends and loyal customers to leapfrog those dreary souls who wrote to him years ago? "People are getting very worried there will be nowhere left," Porter says ruefully. "They read these horror stories about the Savoy and think that everything has gone."

For now, Porter has decided to do nothing. He is not selling out, not in keeping with the spirit of a friendly, family-run hotel, is he whacking his prices up. On January 1, 1999, he will write back to letter number one, and ask whether they are still interested. And then to letter number two. And so on.

Elsewhere, it is the same story. The Landmark Trust, which owns 165 historical properties stuffed full of period character, has been deluged with millennial inquiries. They are generally all full anyway over New Year. "We have had a very high level of interest but we are not accepting bookings yet," a

spokeswoman says twitly. And when was the first request made? "I have been here 18 years," she says. "Ever since I have been here people have been asking about it."

Good grief. Over at the top end of the market, at Claridge's and the Savoy, there has been a "constant flow" of requests throughout 1997, it transpires. The programme has yet to be confirmed — as have the prices.

Some people have taken pre-emptive to ridiculous lengths: the Albert Hall has been booked since 1976. Madame Tussaud's has gone, while punters continue to vie for Tower Bridge and Wembley Stadium. "If at all possible," Michael Heseltine announced sagely at an Arts Council lunch in 1989, "purchase an option on any dance hall you can find for the night of December 31, 1999."

Meanwhile, the question of which millennial party to attend becomes increasingly pressing. Like so much else in British public life, festivities are already beginning to divide sharply along party lines. Jeffrey Archer has let it be known that he plans to invite "some people round" to his penthouse flat overlooking the Thames.

These "people" will no doubt include most of the Shadow Cabinet: William Hague and John Major were both spotted at his Christmas bash last year. Whether guests will be presented with a special Archer mature cheddar — the former Tory party chairman traditionally gives such edible gifts to important guests — remains to be seen.

While the Tories gather on the river and ponder whether the next millennium will herald a return to office, Cool Britannia will be on the Thames at Greenwich. Peter Mandelson will be there too. Despite the fact that the Millennium Dome has been written off by the media, the grand opening ceremony on December 3, 1999, is likely to be the party to be at. There will be fireworks and laser show above the Thames, hands, the Spice Girls and maybe even Oasis.

The presence of Tony Blair guarantees that attendance for most of the Government — and any backbencher who still nurses

hope of promotion — is a political imperative. One just hopes there is not a repeat of the squirmingly embarrassing scenes at the Royal Festival Hall during Labour's election victory party last May. Who could forget the triumvirate of Neil Kinnock, John Prescott and Peter Mandelson getting on down to Things Can Only Get Better's the Millennium Experience (that's the Dome to you and me), puts it like this: "I know where I'm going to be. I'm going to be here, working."

She also need not worry about getting hold of one of the 30,000 tickets to the Dome bash. Owing sums up the attitude of the vast apathetic majority to New Year's Eve, 1999. "You tend to leave these things until the last minute unless you are very organised," she says. The younger generation, she adds, tend to be unmoved by millennial hype.

Over at the offices of the Samaritans, some preliminary thought is being given to how to cope with all those who fail to book the creaking Scottish castle of their dreams, not to mention those who cannot afford it. The number of calls to the Samaritans traditionally rises by 12 per cent over Christmas and 9 per cent over the New Year period. In the run-up to the millennium, the figure is likely to rise sharply.

Sally Fidd, honorary consultant psychiatrist to the Samaritans, describes her outpatients clinic in December as "a terribly depressing time" and she can imagine that "with increased hype over the millennium there will be a greater sense of that". Spare a thought, then, for those who suffer from what the 19th century French sociologist Emile Durkheim famously called anomie, an acute form of millennial angst. "It is a sense of being isolated and withdrawn and not any part of the society around you," Fidd explains. "Anomie epitomises this sense of social isolation and is closely related to suicide rates."

So, if the thought of the millennium leaves you cold, you are not alone.

Back in millennium land, though, there are more pressing concerns: like making fast millennial buck. Among France's leading champagne producers, for example, there is jubilation at the marketing opportunities the millennium brings. "It's a real shot in the arm," one grower admitted last week. Taittinger, to name but one producer, is offering numbered magnums of a special Cuvée du Millénaire at £60 each. The industry expects to sell more than 300 million cases of bubbly this year in advance of the millennium, 50 million more than usual.

At British Airways, Captain Jack Lowe is still sifting through the sack of requests he has received to charter a millennial Concorde. The cost — at least £200,000 per plane, or around £850 a ticket — does not seem to have put people off. No room decision has been made yet about what to do with BA's fleet of seven supersonic aircraft (though you can guarantee they will not spend the millennium in a maintenance hangar).

Lowe talks through the suggestions. Concorde could fly the world in 24 hours, taking the passengers to several millennium parties in one trip. Alternatively, BA could have three Concorde crossing different time zones in New York, Hong Kong and London, Concorde Captain Lowe explains smoothly, "is an important PR tool."

Not everyone, though, is likely to possess the confidence to charter a Concorde. Back at the Burgh Island Hotel, another letter arrives by tractor. "An too early but too late," the correspondent begins faintly, yet another victim of that

# Girl power: all work and no say

Women helped win the war but lost out in peacetime. Now they are beating men to the jobs. **Sheila Rowbotham** on the price they are paying for this victory

Well it's happened. The Office for National Statistics announced this week that women outnumber men in the workplace for the first time during peace. To be pedantic, that was the picture last September when the quarterly figures from 1996 were updated: in fact men have been creeping back up since then. Still, these figures signal a big shift in the structure of employment. Women cannot be seen as marginal. We really are the workers now.

Of course, it hasn't happened all of a sudden. It is not that a gang of starchy women have suddenly landed in the labour market and elbowed the men out — like those in the Ikea advert who throw away their chintz. A profound change in the structure of employment has been a long-term process.

Does it mean then that emancipation has crept up on us unawares? Earning money and going out to work can bring independence but few women's rights campaigners are jumping for joy. The rates of pay and the type of work matter, but so does the kind of life you can come home to.

The last time women numerically overtook men was during the second world war. But it was clear then that all those Rosie the Riveters were there to serve the war effort. They were doing their bit under exceptional conditions. The economy and the nation took precedence. And they knew they were there only for the duration.

"I'm only a wartime working girl" went the song. And out they went when the second world war II was over. They had hardly got home when Labour shortages meant employers wanted them back — but on low pay. Part-time work, introduced during the war because of the shortage of childcare, persisted. But the 1950s working mothers on the new twilight shifts were damned if they did and damned if they didn't. In *Women's Two Roles*, Alva Myrland and Viola Klein commented acidly: "between the Scylla of rejection and the Charybdis of over-protection the education of the child steers an uncertain course." And throughout women's long march into the labour force, the powers that be assumed they could be in two places at once.



Rosie the Riveter... she helped win the war but was sent back to the kitchen sink when peace came

During the war this schizophrenia in state policy had been extreme. Women were told their country needed them as workers and as mothers. This contradictory attitude was to continue. William Beveridge stressed the vital role of women in the family

not only for husbands but for the nation. The Welfare State did attempt to shift social resources to non-earners. The catch was that women as individuals vanished into the composite blob as dependents in the family. In contrast, the woman power lobby argued that a

modernised economy required well-paid women workers. In the early 1960s, when financial pundits speculated on economic growth, married women began to look like labour power.

But between the nation, the family and the economy women's own

needs and desires as individuals were not considered. This is why Hanna Govron's bestseller, *The Captive Wife*, marked a real watershed in 1966. She focused on women's feelings about combining work and childcare and on the social transformation which would mean a better life for women and for children. This involved not just resources for back-up provision, childcare or health centres: "The community should include children." Changes in the social environment and new kinds of collective action were needed.

When the first women's liberation groups formed in the early 1970s we extended her approach, setting up women's centres, community nurseries, food co-ops, and campaigning for democratic services in health, education and housing. There was a strong move to make workplaces more democratic as well — from social service departments to factories.

In the public sector the idea began to develop of more caring human-centred relationships. How we related and what we did at work were important — not just getting jobs. Sharing childcare, not only between parents but between larger groups of people, seemed to make good sense. I remember one proposal for a people's centre in which facilities for small children could be provided along with provision for the elderly. These ideas did not seem starry-eyed at the time — everyone was saying the big problem in the future was going to be too much leisure.

Instead here we are in 1998 in the labour force, working longer hours, suffering from stress, with adverts telling us we can't afford to stay at home for the never mind looking after children. And New

Labour insists that work is the tonic we all need. There's something wrong. There's more to the emancipation than having a job which makes you worry; and more to equality than narrowing the differential with men whose rates of pay have gone down. There should be more to life than having no time to live.

New Labour have now launched a campaign to get employers to be more parent-friendly. This does at least recognise that lack of time is reaching crisis proportions. But past efforts to get the majority of employers to concern themselves with benevolent acts which don't make profits have not been renowned for success. They are unlikely to have a big effect today.

Now we are the workers. I would prefer it if instead of trying to make us good or useful to the economy, New Labour re-orientated its policies. Beneath all the modernising gloss, scratch the surface and what do you find? That old-time nation, that composite blob "the family" that has to be glued together, and that economy which is not averse to woman power, especially if it's cheap. Women as individuals are still getting squashed in between.

Come to think of it, they might get a few good ideas by swopping places for a few weeks with some of those who are busy improving and deploying. They might come away inspired by a whole new direction of policy. Governments, nations, economies, labour markets, policies and such like are there ultimately to enable individuals to enjoy happier and freer lives, not the other way round.

Sheila Rowbotham is a research fellow in sociology at Manchester University. Her most recent book is *A Century of Women*, published by Viking/Penguin.



## arts

Patrick Marber's play about the flip side of swinging London was an instant sensation. **Lyn Gardner** talks to the key players

## Sex in a chilling climate

The Making Of *Closer*

From the earliest previews of *Closer*, word began to spread that Patrick Marber had done what is generally considered impossible in the theatre: followed a successful, award-winning first play — *Dealer's Choice* — with a second that was even better.

Marber's modern love story about a quartet of young people who love, desire, betray and fuck each other against the backdrop of an anonymous London quickly became the hottest ticket in town. Under-40s in particular were hooked by the play's filmic, back-tracking style and sex in a chilling climate.

*Closer* also marked the theatre's first scene of cybersex, in which Dan impersonates a woman online to Larry, who believes he has met the dirty-talking fantasy woman of his dreams.

Critics compared *Closer*, which opened at the National's Cottesloe theatre in May before transferring to the larger Lyttelton, to *Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Pinter's *Betrayal* and *Hare's Skylight*. "On the surface, *Closer* is urbane, witty, obscene, modern; beneath the skin, it is deeply, painfully, and and wise," declared the *Financial Times*. *Closer* went on to win the Evening Standard Award for best comedy and the Time Out best play. It will undoubtedly win more awards.

Patrick Marber: In the summer of 1996, a bit of life happened to me. Romantic stuff, a series of events in my personal life. I had been beginning to think of writing a play and I thought, this is good stuff and I can use it.

Richard Eyre: After *Dealer's Choice* I asked Patrick to write a play for the Lyttelton, and what he said he wanted to write was a city comedy, a sort of Jonsonian comedy of our times. I remember talking it out with him and I could see it happening, the poster for it, the cast and so on. The only thing lacking was the writing.

Patrick Marber: I always start with the sound of someone's voice. An image, a line, and I'm off. The very first scene I wrote was the one set in the lap-dancing club between Alice and Larry which now opens Act 2. It came out of taking *Dealer's Choice* on tour to Atlanta the previous year. While we were there, the cast said they were going to a lap-dancing club and did I want to come? It's a very knowing, new lad thing to be interested in porn, but I'm not. But I was persuaded to go and the experience was akin to the very first time that I walked into a casino. A disturbing strangeness.

It was that I remembered when I started writing that scene and the rest of the play formed either side of it. At that time I thought the play was going to be about sex and power. I suppose it still is but it was much more political at that time, and I consider it a failure of the play that the politics dropped out of it as it went through drafts. Originally it was 190 pages; now it's 90.

Sally Dexter: I was asked if I would do a workshop on the play, though at the time I was very keen to keep out of the theatre and make myself available for film. Anyway, I thought Patrick wanted a blonde for the role of Anna. So I ended up with Mark Strong, Stephen Dillane and Kate Beckinsale at the National Theatre Studio, working on this play the size of a telephone directory. We'd rehearse it voicing objections, making comments, trying things out, and Patrick would come back each day with changes and new scenes. I had a very painful emotional upheaval in my own life at the time, and it was a cathartic experience to channel those feelings into the play. It seemed to fit a need that I had.

Patrick Marber: On some level, I believe that there is no such thing as an honest relationship. The best you can hope for is an honest relationship with yourself. One of the starting points of the play was that I hadn't, since the film *Sex, Lies and Videotape*, seen anything that put my generation's romantic concerns in any kind of perspective. I just wanted to see something that expressed the conversations that I was having — that people in their thirties were all exploring.

Mark Strong: I was doing *Death of a Salesman* at the time, and it was going out on tour so I knew I couldn't be in the eventual production. But I was totally intrigued by it and Patrick's way of working. He seems to need the actors to help him visualise the characters. I always wondered how the thing was going to stand up when it got to production, because it's a bunch of four people reciting quite cerebrally. There are no obvious theatrical fireworks. It's very lean.

Patrick Marber: Sam Mendes was going to direct it, but as the first day of rehearsals drew nearer there was still no finished play. Also, he was going to have to do it back to back with *Antony and Cleopatra* and the *Dominion* was having problems at the time. So he pulled out, which was how I came to direct it, which was probably just as well because as soon as I'd



## Cast of characters



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written the first draft I realised that my working method is to write, cut and re-draft all the way through rehearsal. I even change it now. When you stop changing things, it's dead.

Liza Walker: I don't know how Patrick found me. I wasn't even in Spotlight [the actors' directory]. I just got a phone call saying, go and collect script from the National Theatre. I sat down to read it and I couldn't stop. I understood it immediately. I'd been through relationships like that. I thought it was really courageous, because it said

all the things that people think but no one has the nerve to say. I went to read it for Patrick the next day, and the day after that I heard I'd got the part. Patrick was taking an enormous risk because I'd never been on stage before.

Patrick Marber: Casting the play is like running a dating agency. You've got to cast four actors who are sexually compatible. Alice has got to see the point of Dan, and so has Anna, who's got to see the point of Larry. Because Sally had been Anna in the workshops, in the later drafts she was the face and voice of

the character. I wrote for her. But with the others it was more difficult. Things which seem incredibly important when you are writing become less important when you're casting it.

For a long time the play was untitled. The reason I eventually decided to call it *Closer* rather than, say, *Love, Sex And Other Miseries* was that I didn't want to close down the options for the audience about what it was about. For me, it was about identity, the city, death and the need to do something before you die. And the fact that the

self who falls in and out of love may be a very different person from the one who walks the dog, goes to work and makes the tea.

Vivien Mortimer: I'd worked as a designer with Patrick before when he had directed Craig Raine's 1993 at the Almeida. He sent me an early draft of *Closer*. More drafts dropped through the letterbox. I read a classic with confidence, but I'm rubbish at reading new plays. So much new writing is televisual. But there was something about *Closer* which got to me. The writing is very heightened and Patrick

words and actions remain — they are always there. The ambience of the play is my own life. It is almost all set within a mile of where I live in Smithfield. I used to walk my dog in Finsbury Park, where the walls of the old Finsbury Estate are situated. I was also much influenced by Milan Kundera and the idea of the city as a place of coincidences and strangeness, a place where people aren't organically connected. There is also a lot of Jonathan Franzen's *Small City* in it.

Paddy Considine: Patrick told me he was doing a modern love story. Originally we decided that it didn't need composed music but popular reference points. Then Patrick was keen to have something more romantic. He said it needed something like Elvis Costello. Then about two weeks into rehearsal I realised I really wanted to compose the music myself. Watching it in rehearsal, I began to realise the play was fundamentally about sex. My original idea was to do it using a soprano sax, which is moody and melancholic, but has a spiky energy too. But Patrick was insistent it should be a cello.

Simon Baker: It was a question of setting Paddy's music within the London landscape of the play. I went for a generic and quite aggressive sound — lots of jazz brakes, which I think for most people are really the sound of London. I needed that with Paddy's strings. It gives quite a hardcore edge, a sense of the anonymous city.

Patrick Marber: The idea of the disconnected city was continued in the Internet scenes. The second scene I wrote. I think of it as a

**'There is no such thing as an honest relationship' — Patrick Marber**

*Twelfth Night* "breaches scene" in reverse. Very Shakespearean. Originally I wrote it between a man and a woman, but then I realised I was missing a trick and could show unfilled male fantasy at work, get really plugged into their libidos. It gets more laughs than I anticipated. When I wrote it, I thought it was rather disturbing.

Emma B Lloyd: The first time we tried to run the Internet scene, it took the actors 40 minutes to type the dialogue. Patrick and I tried it later and got it down to 20, but of course that was still hopeless. In the end we had to get a special computer programme written with the whole script on the programme. So though it looks real, the actors are only pretending to type. How it works is that I watch them very carefully and when they touch the first key for a sentence I activate a quick key which makes the whole thing appear on the big screen above their heads. The entire scene now takes six minutes.

Liza Walker: The six-week rehearsal period seemed to go on for ever. I felt completely out of my depth. I didn't know what was going on. People kept saying, next week we're going to have the technical rehearsals, and I didn't know what a technical rehearsal was, let alone what to do or where to stand.

Emma B Lloyd: Liza learned in six weeks what most people take three years at drama school to learn. Heather Leat: Patrick has very strong ideas about what the characters should wear. If the actor walks in wearing something he likes he wants the character to have it. He doesn't always understand that actors may be reluctant to give their clothes away. Liza wore a black leather coat to rehearsals and Patrick wanted her to wear it as Anna. But we said, she can't because it's hers. So we got one made up just like it. Of course Liza was easy in terms of costumes because she's perfect casting. The stuff she wears is the stuff Alice would wear.

Liza Walker: I think Patrick probably does think that I am Alice. I don't know whether that's a good or a bad thing. I do find it quite difficult to snap out of her. Sally Dexter: This play makes you dig into your soul and that's why I don't want to do it eight times a week. When I'm on stage, it is genuinely upsetting. I can't divorce myself from it. It is hugely painful and enjoyable at the same time.

Mark Strong: In the more intimate Cottesloe it opened to silence. I think people felt brutalised. In the bigger Lyttelton they are more dispassionate and distanced, so they can laugh more.

Patrick Marber: It doesn't offend me when people describe it as a comedy. It starts as a romantic comedy with a classic Hollywood cute meet. I suppose it's an intimate comedy like *Private Lives* about people who can't live with each other but who can live with each other either. It is a particular kind of dark, bleak film de siècle comedy.

Liza Walker: I can't believe that that everyone likes it. Patrick Marber: Writing this play was really difficult. But it has given me the confidence to think that maybe I'm a proper writer, as opposed to a comic trying his hand at play-writing.

*Closer* continues in rep at the Lyttelton (0171-228 2252) until February. It will later transfer to the West End.

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# Racing

Weather threatens turf meetings but Tony Paley expects Karl Burke's seven-year-old to storm in on the sand at Lingfield

## Night City looks a capital wager

**N**EWBURY have switched two races from yesterday's abandoned meeting to today's fixture to form a nine-race card, but prospects for racing are only 50-50.

"We are holding a 7.30am inspection and if we don't get much more rain we'll be okay. But if we do, then we'll be off," said the clerk of the course, Richard Pridham, yesterday.

With a band of heavy rain forecast to sweep the country this morning, it must be odds against Newbury going ahead. And to make matters worse, rain is also a threat at Uttoxeter, where the BBC will switch their cameras if racing at the Berkshire course is called off.

Armchair punters should still enjoy action, however, as Channel Four are scheduled to cover all-weather racing at Lingfield, where the bookmakers have priced up the last three races.

Night City (2.40) is fairly well exposed, but may be able to follow up his recent course and distance defeat of Tarry despite another rise up the ratings in the Ladbroke Tele-Betting Handicap.

Karl Burke's charge is guaranteed to stay in a race in which a number of his opponents are unproven at the mile-and-a-half trip. He is best placed at 9-2 with Coral, which may well prove worth taking as he is as low 100-30 with the Tote.

Toujours Riviera has failed in 11 attempts at distances in excess of a mile, and the selection may have most to fear from Quiet Arch and Messy Seven.

The best bet on the card appears to be Friendly Brave (1.40) in division one of the Ladbroke Handicap.

The eight-year-old gelding is very consistent and gained due reward for a number of credible efforts last year.



First Edition... Pip's Edition (third from right) is poised to deliver his winning challenge at Southwell yesterday

PHOTO: GEORGE SHELTON

when winning over the minimum trip at the course last month.

The step up to six furlongs should suit Gay Kelleway's runner, who faces a seemingly easier task in a race in which several are difficult to fancy.

Tangerine Flyer (12.40)

showed enough speed when beating Best Of Our Days here last month to suggest he can defy a step up in class in the Ladbroke On Course Betting Shop Handicap.

The map is Linden's Lotto (2.55) in the Queen's Stand Handicap Chase at Musselburgh. The top weight has im-

proved since joining Gordon Richardson's yard and travelled in the style of one sure to stay when accounting for River Unshion at Catterick a fortnight ago.

At Uttoxeter, Sale By The Stars (1.05) will be suited by the testing conditions in the Laurent Ferrier Handicap

Chase. She ran well over an inadequate distance at Uttoxeter when in need of the race in November and looked one to follow when quickening in good style to beat Kamikaze at Lingfield last month.

Some of Henrietta Knight's runners have needed their debut outings this season, but

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# SPORTS NEWS 19

## Dorans Pride aims to maintain golden standard

Ken Oliver

**D**ORANS PRIDE, the 4-1 favourite for the Gold Cup, is the star attraction at Naas this afternoon when Channel Four will include the Boyle Handicap Chase in their live racing coverage.

Michael Hourigan's gelding was forced to miss an outing at Leopardstown last Sunday because of an abscess on a foot, but was reported in great shape after a workout yesterday morning.

"He worked fine this morning and will run tomorrow," said Hourigan. "People say it is an easy race for him, but it is never easy giving three stone away. He has got to run and we will see about the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup after the race."

Dorans Pride, who finished third in the Cheltenham Gold Cup last season when the ground was too fast for his liking, has won his three races this term.

Norman Williamson has decided not to appeal against a three-day ban he incurred for careless riding on Avant Express, who was disqualified after passing the post first at Warwick on Wednesday.

"I will not be appealing as it was plain to see I came off a straight line," said Williamson. "Although I'm

not absolutely sure it affected the result, rules are rules."

The ban, which runs from next Friday, rules Williamson out of the Ladbroke Handicap at Leopardstown a week today when he was due to partner another favourite Commanche Court.

David Parker repaid a debt to owner-trainer Michael Dun when riding Coqui Lane to a 4-length victory over Beach Head in the Western House Handicap Chase at Ayr yesterday.

He had been guilty of a monumental blunder when riding the gelding at Kelso last month. Coqui Lane had crashed through the wing of a fence after Parker had become confused over which fences were supposed to be jumped.

The jockey had tried to make Coqui Lane jump the fence after initially believing the obstacle was one that had been omitted because of the low sun, and he was banned for five days as a result of the error that left Dun fuming.

"I was that cross on the day that we think of changing the jockey," said Dun, who trains three horses under permit, "but I have done it myself and everyone makes mistakes, so we let him keep the mount and he has given it a great ride today."

### Trainer watch

Horses leaving their first run for a new trainer today — Lingfield: 1.10 Stopped, M Channon to M Quinn; 2.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 3.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 4.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 5.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 6.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 7.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 8.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 9.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 10.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 11.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 12.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 13.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 14.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 15.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 16.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 17.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 18.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 19.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 20.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 21.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 22.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 23.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 24.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 25.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 26.10 Kington, J Easton to P Ingram; 27.10 Tatum, M Wane to Miss Kay; 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# Distance no object for bold Radcliffe

1.  $\frac{1}{2} \times 100 = 50$

Magazine	13	60	21.7	-8.42
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# Conner joins Toshiba for sprint

## Oldham launch late Challenge Cup move

Canvey Island, Braintree Tn, Chafford St Peter v Witham Tn, Cheshunt v Hornham, Mill Police v Leigham Tn, Woudaton v Tibury, Wodear & Elton v Tooging & Mitham, Wharfedale v Egham Tn, Taird Division, Craythorn Casuals v Wingate & Fintley, Croydon Ash v Camberley Tn, East Thurrock Utd v Ware, Ford Utd v Fleetwood Hth, Harlow Tn v Tring Tn, Hartford Tn v Dorling, Kingsbury Tn v Harrel Hemstead, Southall v Clacton.

**LEAGUE OF WALES (230):** Bangor C v Caernarfon Tn; Barry Tn v Ebbw Vale; Carmarthen Tn v Caereuws; Connaeth's Quay Carmar. Ynys Mon; Cwmwrn v Inter Cable Tn; Newlawn v Aberystwyth; Porthmadog v Flint Tn; Rhayader Tn v Haverfordwest; Welshpool v Rhyl.

**TOPPER DECK CHRISTMAS CUP:** Fife v  
Telford (7.0); Guildford v Slough (8.0);  
Kingston v Solihull (8.30); Lancashire v  
Lurrayfield (8.0); Paisley v Peterborough  
(9.0). **Testarossa:** Kingston v Cardiff (8.30);  
Peterborough v Fife (8.15); Solihull v  
Lighthill (7.0); Telford v Lancashire (8.30).

**GOODYEAR**

**NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE**  
Luton v Exet. v Bolton 22.20.

**WOMEN'S NATIONAL TROPHY:** Semi-final: Tynes & Wear v Doncaster (12.0).



[illegible]

**Master of denial ...** Angus Fraser, left, has the Caribbean experience and natural style to show Andy Caddick, above, and Dean Headley, below, the virtues of concentration and unwavering line and length that are essential to frustrate West Indian batting instincts



## Mike Selvey weighs up the expectations and requirements at the start of a tour that finds West Indies in decline if not disarray

**W**HERE some England teams of recent vintage might have taken tumblebills to the airport en route to the Caribbean, the side that leave today for their pre-tour warm up in Antigua know they might never have a better chance of catching West Indies on the top of the world.

For the most part, the optimists seem to believe the next three months will be a cakewalk, some of the odds makers suggest England have more chance of winning the five-Test series than Screaming Lord Sutch becoming a junior cabinet minister. History is not on their side.

The five-day batting-fest in Antigua that concluded England's last West Indies tour, when Brian Lara got his record 375 and both sides made 583 in their first innings, was the 50th time the sides had met in the Caribbean. The last time was nine to West Indies' 20 — and only three of the 23 matches since Gary Sobers' gambling instinct halted the 1967-68 series on a plateau in New Cowsay.

Yet the evidence points to a decline in the standing of West Indies cricket from the high ground of the last two decades, when first Clive Lloyd and then the autocratic Viv Richards carried all before them.

Today was the 13th anniversary of the end both of Lloyd's captaincy after 74 matches in charge and of a domination that ran to 27 matches without defeat. In those days and the years that followed the sort of performance given by West Indies in Antigua, where they lost all three Tests, two by an innings and the third as near as dammit, would have been unthinkable.

West Indian cricket clearly has problems, be they cyclical or the legacy of complacency during the glory years of the 1970s. The American satellite channels and soccer to poach the youth of the late Eighties. But crisis might be

pitching them too strongly. West Indian teams, by their inter-regional nature, are volatile and often faction-ridden — as might be an EU football side — with the captaincy, currently the big issue, as much ambassadorial and mediating as executive. Lloyd gave his cricketers, and with it the Caribbean, self-esteem; Richards carried little for the political niceties but carried the role off anyway with his talent and patrician arrogance; and Richie Richardson handled a side already on the wane with dignity until he was driven

Lara, a man with a sharp cricket brain, has been captain in waiting for longer than he cares to think about and he continues to wait while the West Indies Cricket Board continues to overrule the selectors, chaired by Lara's mentor in Trinidad, Joey Carew. The board has given Courtney Walsh a temporary role that runs now to 23 matches. It queries Lara's team priorities over his commercial ones.

tainly as far as this winter is concerned. Consider: they have three middle-order batsmen — Lara, Shivnarene Chandernaul and Adams — who average above 50 in Tests over a significant period; they have a quality opener in Sherwin Campbell and a talented if mercurial player in Carl Hooper; and they have Walsh and, they fervently hope, Curtly Ambrose one last time, with the backing of the tyros Franklin Rose and Merv Dillon.

of deliveries that simply demand evasion and the West Indian habit of sitting dead when the initiative has been wrested from them all restrict that option.

So occupation of the crease is vital and much will be expected of Mike Atherton, not just to blunt the attack but as the man most capable of batting for the necessary hours.

It will be a big tour for Graham Thorpe, too. He is now rated one of the top three batsmen in the world, averaging 36 against West Indies, with a half-century every

three knocks. But he has no hundreds. Thorpe's capacity to adapt his game to the needs of the moment is unrivalled in the side but he and England need more of the centuries he has started to score.

The keyword for the bowlers has to be concentration. West Indian batsmen are under pressure to score fast: from the crowd, from their peers and from their heritage. Deprive them of the big shots through relentless line and length and bowlers are half way to dismissing them.

It is here that the loss of

posed, the pacemen roughed them up without fear or favour. Glenn McGrath, in his Test infancy and a total mug with the bat, did so, famously and bravely knowing he would be peppered when he batted. It was a significant factor in winning the series.

England will be relying on spin, too, to some extent. Phil Tufnell's support for Fraser in Bridgetown was superb but the opportunities for him and Robert Croft to bowl in tandem as a pair of attacking spinners might be restricted to the third Test in Georgetown.

**The message with the bat is to keep West Indies out in the field at all costs**

led an A team to South Africa late last year. If it does, there would be a hue and cry in Trinidad and Lara and his camp would be incandescent. But there would be relief in some quarters: Lara and senior elements in the side often do not see eye to eye.

In pure cricket terms, however, the demise of West Indies as a Test side may have been greatly exaggerated, con-

region, will test English resolve to the limit. To win, England must have a strategy and they need look no further than the single-minded, unflinching discipline of the Australian side that won in the Caribbean two years ago. The message with the bat is to keep West Indies out in the field at all costs. Fast scoring is never easy: the over rate, the concentration

**Deprive them of big shots by relentless line and length and they are half way to being out**

It is imperative that Andy Caddick, a reluctant listener apparently, and Dean Headley absorb the message and important too that, when the West Indies lower order is ex-

chance, their best for years. But West Indies' pride in front of their own crowds is worth rubies to them and the doubt remains whether England's bowlers have the ammunition or discipline to contain and dismiss the opposition twice sufficiently often. A drawn series would represent a terrific performance; a win would be a triumph almost beyond belief.

# Cronje crawl brings boos

### Bruce Harford in Sydney

**T**HE South Africans may have underlined at Melbourne what a difficult side they are to beat, but yesterday at the SCG they allowed their detestation of defeat against their old enemy to influence their batting far too strongly on a belter of a pitch. In taking 97 overs to make 197 for five, they convinced a crowd of nearly 35,000 that they had no interest in trying to score quickly enough to win this second Test. So much so that Ransie Cronje was booted when he went to a 189-ball 50 with only four boundaries.

## Scoreboard

<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>	
<b>First halves</b>	
O Horan & R. van der Merwe	11
J. Kallis & J. de Klerk	16
J. Kallis run out	18
M. Cronje not out	26
H Gibbs & Healy b BENAAR	36
B McCullum & Elliott b BENAAR	4
Pollard & BENAAR	9
Extras (nb7, b4, nc2, w1)	1
Total (for 5, 97 overs)	167
Full list of wickets: 25, 70, 70, 167, 174.	
To receive contracts: P. Symcox, P. Adams, A. Donald.	
Bowling: McGrath 14-5-51-1; Reithel 10-6-34-0; Warner 22-5-50-1; M Weight 20-3-41-2; Elliott 15-5-50-1; M Weight 20-3-51-8; S Weight 8-0-10; Elliott 1-0-0-0.	
<b>AUSTRALIA</b> M Taylor, M Elliot, G Blewett, M Weight, S Warner, A Ponting, M Bevan, T Twissie, P Reithel, S Warner, G	

Perhaps Cronje, proud Afrikaner that he is, was still seething with indignation after South Africa's much cherished national anthem was mucked up three times by the incompetence and ill manners of the PA operator before the start of the match.

That was typical of a farcical morning, which had begun with play being delayed by 30 minutes on a baking hot day because the groundsman had excessively watered part of the square.

Then came the anthem episode, during which the tourists were introduced as South Australia. Even when play began the chaos continued as the drinks wagon broke down in the middle of the ground. Glenn McGrath, Mark Waugh and the national umpire Peter Willey had to push the cart to the boundary fence, to the huge amusement of the crowd.

But whatever the reasons for his excessive caution, McGrath sent out exactly the message Australia needed on a day that would have gone against them for them with both McGrath and Shane Warne finally feeling the after-effects of their long bowls in the drawn first Test.

McGrath started well enough, cutting out a run from Gary Carter to give Australia a rare respite.

to join the England A squad in Kenya after the promotion of Chris Silverwood, the Yorkshire fast bowler, to the senior party for the West Indies.

Silverwood, who joined the rest of the England squad in London yesterday, says Yorkshire had hoped the withdrawal of Darren Gough with a hamstring injury.

Brown will arrive in Nairobi shortly before England

## Tendulkar pays

THE Indian selectors yesterday sacked Sachin Tendulkar as captain of his country and replaced him with Mohammed Asharuddin.

The dramatic announcement came in Bombay after a two-hour meeting of the five-member selection committee headed by former Test fast

**Set the price for**

India's poor display in Sharjah last month and a diminished performance in a home one-day series in Sri Lanka cost Tendulkar his job. His record as captain shows just three wins in 17 Tests, and 17 in 54 one-day matches, but as one of the world's best batsmen he is certain to retain his

He took a leading role in England's Champions' Trophy triumph in Sharjah, taking two wickets in the first over of their qualifying match against West Indies, including that of Brian Lara.

His Sharjah success followed his most productive county performance to date, when he took 79 first-class wickets as Warwickshire won the AXA Life Sunday League.

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## bad results

and Bangladesh in Dhaka, as well as the home series against Australia, with all-rounders Ajay Jadhav as his deputy.

Andy Flower hit an unbeaten 101, the highest ever score by a Zimbabwean batsman in Sri Lanka, to guide them to 311 for six on the

## Brown gets golden shot as Silverwood flies out

**D** OUGIE BROWN, the Warwickshire all-rounder, will fly out to join the England A squad in Kenya after the promotion of Chris Silverwood, the Yorkshire fast bowler, to the senior party for the West Indies.

Silverwood, who joined the rest of the England squad in London yesterday, was called up after the withdrawal of Darren Gough with a hamstring injury.

Brown will arrive in Nairobi shortly before England

depart for the second leg of their tour to Sri Lanka. Graham Gooch, the tour manager, said: "Dougie will be flying out to join us but won't arrive until January 7. He will only be eligible for our final one-day match against Kenya on January 10, but will continue with us when we fly on to Sri Lanka."

Stirling-born Brown was approached by Scotland after their qualification for the 1999 World Cup, but decided that his future Test career lay with England.

and would not risk becoming ineligible by playing for his own country.

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## Tendulkar pays the price for bad results

**T**HE Indian selectors yesterday sacked Sachin Tendulkar as captain of his country and replaced him with Mohammed Azharuddin.

The dramatic announcement came in Bombay after a two-hour meeting of the five-member selection committee headed by former Test fast bowler Ramakant Dessai.

"We removed Tendulkar because he could not take the pressure of both batting and captaincy," said Dessai.

Azharuddin, 34, returns as captain 18 months after being sacked as captain following India's disastrous tour of England in 1996. He had been India's most successful captain ever, securing 13 wins after he took over in 1990.

India's poor display in Sharjah last month and a mixed performance in a home one-day series in Sri Lanka cost Tendulkar his job. His record as captain shows just three wins in 17 Tests, and 17 in 54 one-day matches, but as one of the world's best batsmen he is certain to retain his place in the team.

"This is a good decision for India," added Desai. "Azhar was removed in 1996 because he was going through a difficult phase in his personal life. Life needed to be rested. But he has changed. Though the stage and we are glad he has stabilised now."

Azharuddin will lead India in next week's limited-overs tournament against Pakistan.

and Bangladesh in Dhaka, as well as the home series against Australia, with all-rounder Ajay Jadesja as his deputy.

Andy Flower hit an unbeaten 101, the highest ever score by a Zimbabwean batsman in Sri Lanka, to guide them to 311 for six on the opening day of the first game of their tour, against a Sri Lanka Board XI in Matara. The previous record was set by current coach David Houghton with 78 in 1983-84.

Grant Flower, Andy's brother and newsreader Murray Goodwin also hit half-centuries. Today's play has been postponed to mark the funeral of a senior Buddhist priest.







## FA Cup, third round

While the Champions League now represents a greater lure than Wembley for the Premiership's heavyweights, **David Lacey** does not expect them to treat the Cup lightly

# Ferguson will demand a passion play

**F**EW third-round FA Cup ties have been more eagerly awaited than tomorrow's noon encounter between Chelsea, the Cup holders, and Manchester United, the Premiership champions, at Stamford Bridge. But does the world's oldest knock-out tournament still enjoy the same prestige and are the leading clubs as passionate about winning it as they used to be?

Last season Ruud Gullit's pleasure at becoming the first foreign manager to lead a team to victory in a FA Cup final was genuine enough and Chelsea's subsequent progress in the Cup Winners' Cup has given the club an

added fillip. Yet the rewards for success in the FA Cup are insignificant compared to the riches available in the Champions League, and for half a dozen teams involved in ties this weekend the latter has the greater appeal financially if not emotionally.

No doubt the supporters of Blackburn, Liverpool, Leeds United and Arsenal would relish the prospect of a trip to Wembley on May 16 along with Chelsea's followers, for whom the novelty can hardly have worn off. And United's fans cannot be so blasé that they would pass up the chance of a fourth FA Cup final in five seasons.

However, the choice between winning the Cup and

occupying one of the top two positions in the league is hardly a choice at all. And while United remain odds-on favourites to win their fifth title in six years, despite their hiccup at Coventry, the contest for second place and entry to the Champions League qualifying round promises to be much tighter.

So while the leading sides will hardly shrug aside the FA Cup, as some have taken to doing in the Coca-Cola Cup, none will be taking their eyes off the main chance. And United have the added complication of regarding this season's Champions League as their principal ambition with retention of the championship a guarantee of immediate participation in the

next, should they go out. Alex Ferguson will demand nothing less than maximum effort from his team at Stamford Bridge. Chelsea have a habit of sticking in United's craw and, after Sunday's careless defeat at Highfield Road, Ferguson will expect his players to spring back.

Denis Irwin, out of action since Paul Bosvelt's wild tackle from behind at Feyenoord two months ago, is due

to return at left-back for the suspended Phil Neville and Peter Schmeichel has a slight chance of returning in goal after injury.

What United do not need this season, however, are Cup replays and this may condition their approach to tomorrow's match and, if they win it, subsequent ties. In other words United may take an all-or-nothing view of the FA Cup. If so, it should be fun while it lasts.

Chelsea simply need to rediscover the prolific pre-Christmas form which started to unravel with the disappointing 1-1 draw at home to Wimbledon on Boxing Day followed by Monday's 1-0 defeat at Southampton. Gullit's team rotations make sense when the team is winning but acquire the Mad Hatter's tea-party touch when things begin to go wrong.

Arsenal are in similar need of a surge in the Cup to arrest a slump in the Premiership. They caught last Port Vale at Highfield but Ian Wright is suspended. Lee Dixon, David Platt and Tony Adams are unfit and flu-hit Dennis Bergkamp looked like death warmed up at White Hart

Lane last Sunday. Arsène Wenger needs to win something this season after the high promise of autumn. Since leaving Highbury John Hartson and Paul Merson have become the toasts of West Ham and Middlesbrough and Wenger's squad is now looking thinner for their departure.

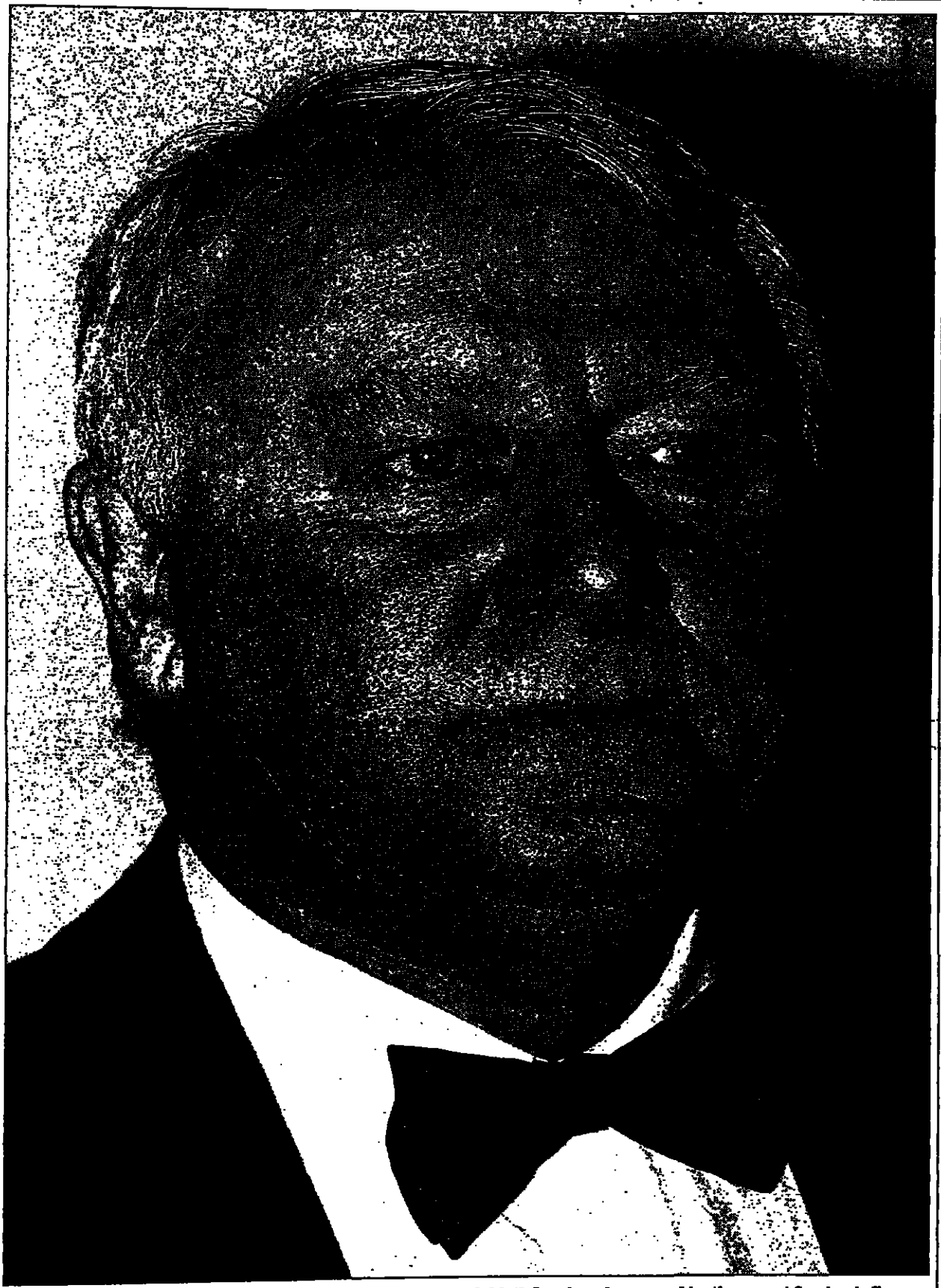
The gradual resurgence of Leeds, moreover, is providing an apt reminder that whatever George Graham might have done off the field at Arsenal he remains a winning manager and coach. Leeds could steal to Wembley this time provided Oxford do not revive embarrassing memories at Elland Road.

Liverpool, however, look a

better Cup bet, having struck a rich vein of form in time for the third round. Four straight victories have revived their confidence and the only doubt about Liverpool's ability to overcome Coventry at a Sunday concerns the defensive lapses which continue to occur, especially at set pieces.

Provided the draw keeps them apart, United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Leeds are likely quarter-finalists. Blackburn, Aston Villa and Newcastle may join them and Watford might be another Chesterfield. Or perhaps Tottenham will win their ninth FA Cup to the strains of Onward Christian Soldiers. Anything is possible at this stage — even that.

**The rewards for success in the knock-out competition pale against some riches in Europe**



Doctor's advice... the outspoken Docherty, nearing his 70th birthday, is unimpressed by the recent foreign influx

The colourful former manager who steered both clubs to FA Cup finals favours the northern side but warns **David Hopps** that one plucky player may upset their plans

## Hughes tonic may make United queasy, says Doc

**W**HAT a way to start the year. Chelsea v Manchester United in the third round of the FA Cup, the match that would have graced Wembley. Tommy Docherty was drooling over the prospect, but first there was the problem of what to do with all those pheasants.

No man can live by such trenchant opinions without getting the bird occasionally, but to find 100 of them on his doorstep brought a distinctive start to the New Year in the Doc's congenial corner of the Peak District.

An after-dinner speech in Dundee a few weeks earlier had hit the button and an appreciative late-night gesture, hazily recollected, was now piled high outside his front door. From somewhere he had such largesse came a familiar, staged Scottish drawl, able both to delight and offend — and demanding only that its audience is constantly "braced for the punchline."

"The first Sunday of the year could hardly be better," said Docherty. "I'll be in front of the box for sure, aye, with a glass of champagne and a cigar. Probably a breast of pheasant now, come to that."

It is a special fixture, the first Sunday in the new year, against a side whose football purism makes them the most popular of the challengers, and it carries particular resonance for Docherty, who led both clubs to FA Cup finals.

That ensures that his loyalty remains durable, but in the after-shock of hearing him experiment with such anodyne phrases as "mixed feelings" and "may the best team win", he could not resist unleashing something a little less ambiguous. A few months before his 70th birthday, prevarication sits as un-naturally with him as ever.

"I've great affection for Chelsea and their supporters, because that's where I started my managerial career," he volunteered. "Joe Mears was a great chairman, straight as a dye, always gave you a 'yes' or a 'no'. But their chairman

now, Ken Bates, must be the ill-mannered man I've ever met in my life. For Bates's sake, I hope Chelsea get beat."

That does not stop Docherty advising Ruud Gullit on the best tactical route to beating United. Forget "tall, push 'em to the back of your mind, soft-pedal even on the excellence of Zola. The man to unsettle United is Mark Hughes, a striker who for many years was an Old Trafford hero."

Although the Welshman's appearance in the New Year's Honour List has been mildly surprising, one suspects that Docherty would gladly have

given him a knighthood. "Gullit should pick Hughes, there's no doubt," he said. "He's been left out a bit, sometimes unfairly, but if they don't play him, they're out of the Cup. Gary Pallister is a fine central defender, but he doesn't like being roughed up."

"Hughes is a great pro. When the ball gets to him it sticks. He's so strong, it's a waste of time trying to take the ball off him while he's got his back to goal. You might as well just give him time to turn round and then have a go."

Docherty observes Chelsea's considerable foreign influx and suspects an imbalance that might yet prove fatal, a superficial glamour that is luring many clubs towards ruin. English clubs spent a net £28 million on imported talent during 1997, but how many players have been truly superior in terms of skill, tactical awareness and preparation?

According to Docherty, "a lot of managers have gone European crackers," and Chelsea might be counted among them. To hell with European Union legislation: Docherty wants Fifa to limit

foreign players to three a club. Though some great players have been introduced into the English game, he recoils at the extent of mediocrity. "People criticise the Norwegians, but they've been the best of the lot," he said. "Great professionals and good value for money. But as for some of the Italians or Brazilians... look at the hassle Bryan Robson has had at Middlesbrough."

"Chelsea will never win the Premiership without the right balance. Leboeuf doesn't want to know when the game gets physical. Everybody raves about these foreign players but sometimes they should ask themselves why are the big European clubs getting them? We should be looking for the player who is taking their place."

Chelsea have had enough vacillating moments to encourage Docherty's doubts about their prospects tomorrow. There was the snow storm in Tromsø where only Villa's late goal-poaching spared their nerves. Just as striking was the goalless draw against a nine-man Leeds side whose physical tactics might have brought disdain, but who left an impression not just on Chelsea limbs, but on the minds of a few Premiership managers. Chelsea? They don't like it up 'em.

By now, the Doc had moved up a gear. "If United are not at their best, Chelsea have the

**'Bates is ill-mannered — for his sake I hope Chelsea get beat'**

ability to win," he conjectured. "But if it's a bit physical, and snowing in the day morning as well, Chelsea won't want to know."

"If Chelsea do win, then get drawn away at somewhere like Oldham in the fourth round, they'll probably go out there. That's no sort of place to visit in midwinter. In January, I don't even fancy driving across Saddleworth Moor."

Listeners to Docherty's Saturday lunchtime show on Manchester's Piccadilly Radio will recognise the tone and will also be aware of his unstinting admiration for United, where successful foreign signings have enhanced, not replaced, an unrivalled stock of quality home-produced players.

A club which sets store by its own youth. A club which, in Docherty's words, "has not forgotten its bread and butter". How often since becoming manager, he wondered "has Gullit bothered to watch Chelsea's youth team? I used to be there every week," he said. And they claim the Sixties were Swinging...

His comments seem enough to guarantee Docherty another sizeable postbag. "I don't want a mailbag," he rasps back. "I'd have to employ a secretary — and that would cost me money."

What might also cost him a few bob tomorrow would be a Chelsea victory. United's success over the past five years has rewarded more than one Docherty wagger. Chelsea supporters, provoked by his opinions, might like to imagine the Doc being a little lighter in the pocket by mid-afternoon. Almost down, in fact to his last pheasant.

**Tears to cheers: Docherty on the Docherty finals**

**Chelsea failed to swing in Sixties London**

"I've never seen a good all-southern final. There is not the same passion or need. Nothing went particularly wrong in the build-up, but it just seemed like another London derby."

"London clubs spend all year in the capital, whereas a northern club feels the excitement, and sees its supporters travelling down in their thousands. I took Chelsea to Brighton for a few days before that 1967 final to get away from the ticket touts."

"Dave Mackay was Tottenham's best player and they beat us 3-1. Even a training session was a cup final for him. My favourite Chelsea memories, I suppose, concern Charlie Cooke. I brought him down from Scotland for £72,000 to replace Venables."

"He would have been a £20 million player today. He was quick, brave and had outstanding skill, a Brazilian touch. He was a fellow Scot and I trusted him. He never let me down."



Head man... Docherty relishes victory after the 1977 final

**'I won Cup for United — then lost my job'**

"AT UNITED the hardest job was clearing out the dead wood of the 1968 European Cup-winning team. Wilf McGuinness and Frank O'Farrell had tried and failed."

"They never got the co-operation that they should have got. By the time I got there, the players were all four years older and the supporters could see they were past their best."

"I fancied us so strongly against Southampton in the 1976 Cup it wasn't true."

You could get odds of 7-1 against Southampton, and for a final that's incredible."

"But if your name is on the cup, then there is nothing anybody can do. Bobby Stokes scored the only goal for Southampton and he never hit a ball better than that in the rest of his life."

"A year after the Southampton defeat we were back at Wembley. This time we beat Liverpool 3-1. I'd finally won the Cup — but before I knew it I was out of a job."

## Gross forced to dip into his reserves



Performance of the week: Darren Huckerby (Coventry City), whose pace and finishing united Manchester United at Highfield Road on Sunday.

**Martin Thorpe**

**A**FTER all the gloomy results and the gloomier speculation about Christian Gross's future, Tottenham's head coach really has caught a cold. But it is not the end of his problems.

Ten senior players are out injured for Monday's potential FA Cup league-aid tie against Fulham, and Spurs' next game is against Manchester United in the Premiership.

Just an average week in the crisis-torn life of the White Hart Lane club with the gutsy Gross insisting that the bigger the test, the bigger his resolve to conquer it.

"This is the biggest challenge of my managerial

career but it only makes me more determined to succeed," he says. "These things make you stronger."

Stronger is hardly the word that comes to mind for the Spurs team as Gross contemplates playing at least three reserve-team players against Kevin Keegan's emerging Fulham, though there is a chance that two of the 10, David Ginola and Andy Sinton, will be fit in time.

Not surprisingly Gross said he was still looking to add to his squad, given a repeat of the injury problems which plagued Gerry Francis's reign at Spurs, although he ruled out a move for Everton's Gary Speed.

As for Gross's commitment to Spurs: "I am 100-per-cent Tottenham," he said. "I am

not a man who says after a few weeks, 'That's it. I am a fighter.' Defeat by Fulham will definitely test his and the supporters' ability to go the distance."

Matthew Le Tissier was at the centre of a literal storm yesterday, as strong winds prevented him travelling with Southampton for their tie at Derby.

Le Tissier, who is estranged from his wife, flew home to Guernsey after the Premiership win over Chelsea to see his children over New Year, but high winds and storms left him marooned after flights were cancelled.

The 25-year-old forward told Southampton's manager Dave Jones he would have to miss training and the coach journey to the Midlands. And,

with conditions forecast to worsen, there were fears Le Tissier would miss the game.

Jones now hopes Le Tissier will catch a flight this morning and then drive to Pride Park.

Dean Calcutt has revealed he could have been facing up to life behind bars rather than playing against West Ham today.

The Emley winger feared he would be sent to prison following an assault in a night club earlier this year but he escaped jail thanks to his manager Ronnie Glavin and a sympathetic judge. The 23-year-old was given 180 hours' community service instead.

"Relief wasn't the word when I heard the judge pass sentence," said Calcutt. "I

honestly thought I wouldn't be around for this game. My barrister told me it was 50-50 whether I would go down."

"We had just played Lincoln in the first game and the sentencing was on the following Monday. By that time I knew we had been drawn against West Ham and I was thinking, 'Please God, I can't go to jail.'"

"But I was told the judge took the view that he didn't want to take away my chance of a promising career and the possibility of me progressing in football."

"Ronnie was brilliant, totally supportive. He even gave me a reference to hand to the judge and that helped considerably."

Sentencing West Ham to defeat may not prove so easy.

Have you loved the wrong men all of your life?

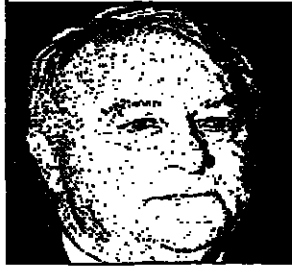
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The Guardian

# sport

**Burley and Lambert settle Old Firm scores**



Firm footing... Craig Burley evades the challenge of Stuart McCall to score Celtic's opening goal in their defeat of their greatest rivals yesterday

## Atherton holds the door open for Gough

**Paul Weaver hears an upbeat captain prepare to fly back to the Caribbean**

THE England captain Michael Atherton and his team, who fly to the Caribbean from Gatwick Airport today, have not yet written off Darren Gough, the Yorkshire fast bowler who withdrew from the party because of injury earlier this week.

Speaking at the airport last night Atherton stressed that Gough was still in their plans. He said: "I spoke to Darren this afternoon and he told me that he's seeing a specialist in three or four weeks. And he if he gets the all-clear there is no reason why he can't come out."

"We don't play a Test for nearly a month and he might well be available for the back end of the tour. He is so disappointed he is not flying out with us because he was really looking forward to doing well on this tour."

Gough, who would have been an automatic selection for Atherton, has hamstring problems and has been replaced in the squad by his county colleague Chris Silverwood. "It is a big disappointment to us. But Darren has been resting, and did not want to bowl until as close to the tour as possible, which is why he has pulled out late. If he can get out there we would be delighted to see him."

pretty hard out there." West Indies were whitewashed 3-0 by Pakistan in the Test series before they were twice beaten by England in the one-day tournament in Sharjah.

England have not won a series in West Indies for 30 years, since Colin Cowdrey's side won 1-0 in 1967-68. Atherton said: "I don't think anyone can pin that record on this team but it would be a great feather in everyone's cap if we can pull it off this time and I really think we have an excellent chance of doing well out there."

"Recent series between England and West Indies have been hard-fought affairs and I expect this one to be the same. Our win in Sharjah was the start of our winter campaign. I will be talking to the lads who played in that tournament because I want to carry on from there. We also showed last summer that we are capable of beating the best."

Atherton's own game will be vital to England chances. He is the batsman best equipped to lead West Indies attack. He is also aware that West Indies' fast bowlers find an extra yard of pace when bowling to opposing captains.

Atherton said yesterday: "I've had a long break but I've been working hard on my fitness and in the nets. I don't think there is anything fundamentally wrong with my game and I stand by my record in our last two series against West Indies."



Atherton... vital to team

**Scottish Premier Division: Celtic 2, Rangers 0**

## Hungry Celtic turn the blue tide

**Patrick Glenn sees the champions suffer first defeat in a decade in a New Year derby**

CELTIC'S first win in a New Year derby ended Rangers' domination of the fixture and sent the green and white borders at Celtic Park into raptures yesterday.

The home support had to wait until Craig Burley's opening goal in the 67th minute before they could start feasting, but they finished up gorging themselves on Paul Lambert's thundering second four minutes from the end.

Celtic had exposed the limitations in Rangers' midfield — bewilderingly, the throx manager Walter Smith had left Paul Gascoigne on the bench — and Burley, Lambert and Morten Weghorst enjoyed an unusual authority.

Jackie McNamara on the right and Tom Boyd on the left for the home side carried much more menace than Rino Gattuso or Alex Cleland, their opposite numbers, and Gattuso's removal after an hour, to be replaced by Gordon Durie, had seemed inevitable long before.

In addition to an overall superiority in the forward areas, the Italian Enrico Annoni gave an immaculate performance in taking the threat out of Brian Laudrup.

Annoni's shepherding hardly gave the Dane an opportunity to demonstrate his skills and the marker finished up stepping with utter conviction in front of his adversary to cut off the supply of passes.

Andy Gorm was in superb form, twice denying Harald Brattbakk, the Norwegian striker starting for Celtic for the first time since his £2.3 million move from Rosenborg four weeks ago. Gorm also made an extraordinary save from Alan Stubbs, the big defender having sent a header hurtling towards the goalkeeper's top left-hand corner.

Brattbakk may have finished goalless, but he would have greatly encouraged the Celtic fans with his intelligent, incisive running and his ability to find space in crowded areas.

It was from such a manoeuvre that he received Boyd's pass, after the latter had broken powerfully out of defence and slotted the ball down the inside-left channel and into the penalty box.

Gorm was out of the blocks at the same time as Brattbakk, however, and

made a terrific block as the Norwegian drove the ball cleanly with his left foot. Brattbakk will be regarded now as a tallisman by the home support and seems likely to prove a profitable purchase.

Rangers were strangely lacking in threat even during those periods when an apparently careful Celtic team were allowing them to move forward. In the entire 90 minutes, the home goalkeeper Jonathan Gould did not have a save to make.

The mystery of Gascoigne's omission was hardly solved when Smith was asked afterwards why he had left it until so late to put him on the field. "I don't think it really mattered when he came on," said Smith. "Celtic were so dominant in the match that no one player could have stemmed the tide."

This does not square with

Gascoigne's history of contributions in the fixture. There have been several occasions when a moment of the England midfielder's incomparable talent has swung the match the way of the champions.

By the time he did replace Jorg Albertz, Celtic were in front by virtue of a beautifully worked and executed goal. McNamara did the construction, feinting past three opponents on the right before delivering a reverse pass to Burley.

The midfielder, unchallenged, rifled his low, right-foot shot past Gorm. Burley is proving himself utterly reliable when given that kind of opportunity and this was his 10th goal of the season.

The one that ensured the victory that would take Celtic to within one point of Rangers at the top of the Premier Division was Lambert's

first since his £2 million transfer from Borussia Dortmund.

Moving on to the loose ball following an attack some 25 yards from goal, Lambert drop-kicked into Gorm's top left-hand corner. "I knew when I hit it, it was good," he said. So did the majority of the capacity crowd, who left intoxicated without touching a drop of the hard stuff.

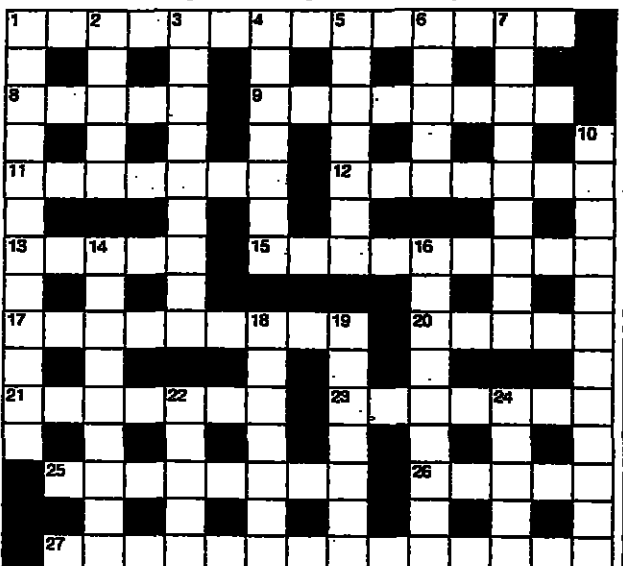
Celtic 2-0: Goals, Annoni, Stubbs, Report: McNamara, Burley, Lambert, Weghorst, Boyd, Brattbakk, Larsen, Renshaw, D-S-C, Gorm, McCall, Parnell, Gough, Gattuso (Durie, 60min), Ferguson, Thorne, Albertz (Gascoigne, 72), Cleland, Laudrup, Negri

## Guardian COLLINS Crossword 21,162

A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to the Guardian Crossword, P.O. Box 14641, London, EC1R 3JX, or Fax to 0171 278 9115 by first post on Friday Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday January 12.

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Set by Araucaria

### Across

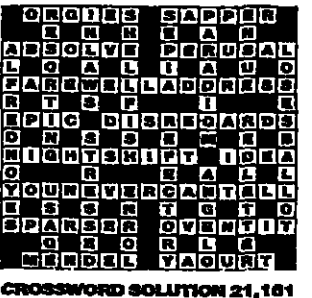
- 1 Strike a light! Missing page proof covered ancient building (6-4,4)
- 8 Pour fat, say, with head-quarters (5)
- 9 Pompey's islands (8)
- 11 Lake of fodder where pike and eagle merge (7)
- 12 Lord's — placed between the covers (7)

### Down

- 13 Painter talking nonsense? (5)
- 15 1 down must be to convince (4,5)
- 17 Poisonous weapons for 1 downs, possibly (4-5)
- 20 Boredom during endless hours of darkness abroad (5)
- 21 Make a face and be sick — over here for choice! (5,4)
- 23 Acquire part of coal-mine back in South Wales (7)
- 25 Tick attached to place in Devon (8)

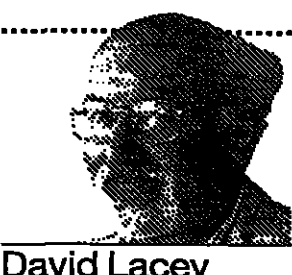
26 Ringworm has a meal around home (5)  
27 Well Celeste managed to manage, having that far away look (5,9)

- 1 Confusion of 27 with 9 affair (6-6)
- 2 Notes made by Greek character just so (5)
- 3 Fruit of a tree to post in church (5)
- 4 Ask for directions to be put in a tree (7)
- 5 Strong point was conductor up to following a score? (7)
- 6 King, one that was a captain to a harlot (5)
- 7 A tree destroyed in a kiln that's been fed too much (8)
- 10 Skill in a horse said to be in condition: here's where it shows first (8-4)
- 14 Point to most of the cemetery displaying wallflower (as it were) (5)
- 16 The wires I got crossed — that's the real point (5,2,2)
- 18 Loose cover, perhaps: have a diluted whisky? (7)
- 19 A short time in confirmation is vitally creative (7)
- 22 Acid's used to find things under water (5)
- 24 It takes two to make sunburn disappear (5)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,161

## The Cup that fails to keep time with its fans



David Lacey

THE third round of the FA Cup in 1983 belongs a special niche in football history, but not because of the results. In fact it was a rather ordinary round as third rounds go.

There was half a shock when Bishop's Cleeve held Middlesbrough to 2-2 at Ayresome Park after being 2-0 down at half-time, but otherwise the ties went largely to form.

No, this third round deserves to be remembered because it was the last time that all 32 ties were played on a Saturday. There were 11 replays, all completed by the

middle of the following week, and only one, involving Sheffield Wednesday and Southend, went to a third match, which Wednesday won 2-1. Bishop's Cleeve, incidentally, lost narrowly at home to Boro by a similar score.

To many minds this is how FA Cups should be: neat and tidy with as few stray ends as possible. Sundays were once spent savouring the moments of the previous afternoon and dreaming about what Monday's draw might bring. Then it was into the Football Association's council chamber with a BBC microphone at 12.30pm sharp to hear some aldermanic types settle the hopes and fears of big and small, rich and poor, with a few dips into a velvet bag.

For decades it was ever thus. Round by round the FA Cup struck a series of resonant chords to interrupt the routine rhythm of the league programme. The third round was always the best round because for one afternoon in the new year it threw together aristocrat and prolet in a classless society and ordered them

to share the same pitch. It offered instant drama up and down the land, and only hung about for the odd replay.

Fifteen years later the FA Cup, while retaining its sense of the dramatic, has lost its sense of timing. Look at what is happening this weekend.

All right, 27 ties will be played today and the airwaves will thrill to news from Crewe and Crystal Palace, Blackpool and Bournemouth, Watford and West Ham. But the main event, the tie of the round, the game which has the nation agog with anticipation, will kick off at noon tomorrow because it is on television and the police believe that starting the match between Chelsea and Manchester United at a time more convenient for supporters would bring communications in west London to a halt.

Followers of Hereford United and Tranmere Rovers will be similarly inconvenienced. Nor will it be that much easier for the travelling fans of Newcastle and Wrexham to support their teams at Everton and Wimbledon.

These ties begin at two o'clock.

Some time tomorrow afternoon the fourth-round draw will be made. Hyped up for television, what was previously an amateurish but enduring little ceremony has now become a tedious event of forced bonhomie, spun out for TV and blunting the point of the exercise.

Even then the business of the third round will not be complete since Tottenham and Fulham play their tie at White Hart Lane on Monday night. Needless to say, Sky cameras will be there.

TELEVISION, even exclusive pay-per-view-in-waiting television, brings the world's oldest and best cup competition to a wide and appreciative audience. It was right that the stomach-tightening moments of last season's classic fourth-round tie between Chelsea and Liverpool and later the enthralling semi-final between Chelsea and Middlesbrough should have been shared by armchair viewers.

Yet combining the demands of TV with the restrictions of the police, who have become hypersensitive in FA Cup matters since the Hillsborough tragedy, has diffused the competition to a point where it is in danger of losing its impact.

No longer could Sheffield Wednesday and Southend meet a third time. Their tie would have to be settled by a shoot-out at the end of extra time in the original replay, which could not go ahead for 10 days because of the prohibitive cost of police overtime.

The FA Cup has retained much of its appeal and many fans will not have known the competition played any other way. But should Chelsea and Manchester United, Cup holders and Premiership champions, have to settle their tie with penalties there will still be a few sighs for the way things were.

Not better necessarily but simpler, and with a plot full of twists rather than an artificially twisted plot, the FA Cup may have become a TV soap, but it no longer bubbles along quite like it did.



**For me, the play was about identity, the city, death and the need to do something before you die. And the fact that the self who falls in and out of love may be a very different person from the one who walks the dog, goes to work and makes the tea.**

Patrick Marber on the making of his play *Closer*

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